

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Dellanna O'Brien:

Middle East missions focus is "miracle from God"

By Karen Benson

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The foreign missions focus on the Middle East this fall is no coincidence or happenstance, according to Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

In fact, she said, "It's nothing short of a miracle from God."

The focus right now on the Middle East region "can only be attributed to the Lord," O'Brien said. "He is the one who should get all of the credit."

The theme selections, areas of focus, curriculum direction, and other plans for the 1990 Foreign Mission Study, Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering were determined in the fall of 1986 through the spring of 1987 — years before the current crisis erupted in the Persian Gulf region.

Now, O'Brien said, it is evident that "the Lord knew what he was doing four years ago when he directed our planning and led our thinking in this direction."

The 1990 plans were developed using a standard, formal process that involves input from representatives from the Foreign Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission, and WMU.

An important feature of the process, O'Brien said, is that the planning meetings are "bathed with prayer."

The Foreign Mission Study this year focuses on "Baptist Ministries in the Arab World: Crossing Barriers with Love." Countries featured include Jordan, Cyprus, Yemen, Gaza, Egypt, and Lebanon.

The Dec. 2-9 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions focuses on the theme "Sent . . . To Serve All Nations" and features a different part of the world each day of the eight-day

observance. The week culminates with a focus on Jordan on the final Sunday of the week.

In addition, 100 Southern Baptist churches have been invited to participate in a pilot project in which they "adopt" Jordan, which has extensive borders with Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The churches will feature Jordanian customs, culture, and religions during their fall emphasis on foreign missions. They also are considering their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goals in light of actual financial needs in Jordan.

A promotion team comprised of representatives from the Foreign Mission Board, Brotherhood, and WMU is overseeing the pilot project effort.

Jordan was chosen late last spring as the country to ask the churches to "adopt," according to Betty Merrell, a WMU representative on the team and coordinator of the pilot project.

"I continue to stand in awe of the Lord and the serendipities he has in store for us as we work with him," Merrell said. "I often feel like taking off my shoes as we walk with him on such holy ground."

There seems to be a heightened awareness and an excitement around the foreign missions emphasis this year like has not been seen in recent years, O'Brien said. "I am convinced that the Lord's hand is at work," she said.

One indication of an increased interest in foreign missions this year is the number of responses to a special video offer.

As a way of saying "thank you," the top 2,000 churches in Lottie Moon Christmas Offering gifts last year were sent a letter in October offering them a free videotape to be used in promoting the offering this year.

According to Foreign Mission Board officials who are administering the project, by the end of the first week in November, almost 1,200 of those churches had sent in the response card asking for the videotape.

A packet of materials to help pastors promote the offering also has drawn an unusually good response, FMB officials said. Order forms contained in the packet started flowing in to the FMB distribution center within a few days of that mailing.

"I am confident that this year is the year Southern Baptists will reach the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal," said R. Keith Parks, FMB president.

Southern Baptists have not reached or exceeded the goal since 1981, when the national goal was \$50 million. The goal this year is \$86 million.

"The Lord is offering Southern Baptists a perfect opportunity to turn our attention and our energies away from our internal conflicts and on to a world full of desperate needs," Parks said.

"The crisis in the Middle East, the emerging opportunities in Eastern Europe, the tragic situation in Liberia — the list goes on of places throughout our world that need our prayers, our money, and our commitment to share the gospel."

Agreed O'Brien: "It doesn't make any difference how much money we give to missions if it's not accompanied by fervent prayer. We need to bathe the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in prayer, just like we bathed the planning in prayer."

When Southern Baptists merge heartfelt prayer with sacrificial giving, she said, "God can indeed work his miracles through us."

Benson writes for WMU, SBC.

'Uncommon' day in the Common

BOSTON (BP) — At one end of the downtown Boston Common a man stood on a street corner with a bullhorn shouting for political reform.

At another, North Carolina Baptist Men dispensed meals from a 45-foot mobile disaster-relief unit.

In between, amid the hustle and bustle of thousands of people, the gospel of Jesus Christ was being shared through drama, mimes, puppets and jugglers.

On the historic 50-acre Boston Common, America's oldest public park, people jogged, walked, ate from street-side vendors, or just enjoyed the warmth of the sunny November day. Many also stopped to observe the performances and to ask questions.

The occasion was a three-hour evangelism outreach sponsored by the

Greater Boston Baptist Association. The outreach was Nov. 3, in conjunction with "The LAOS of Marketplace Evangelism — Boston '90." Boston '90 is the kickoff of a three-year marketplace evangelism emphasis by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"Boston '90" kicks off marketplace evangelism.

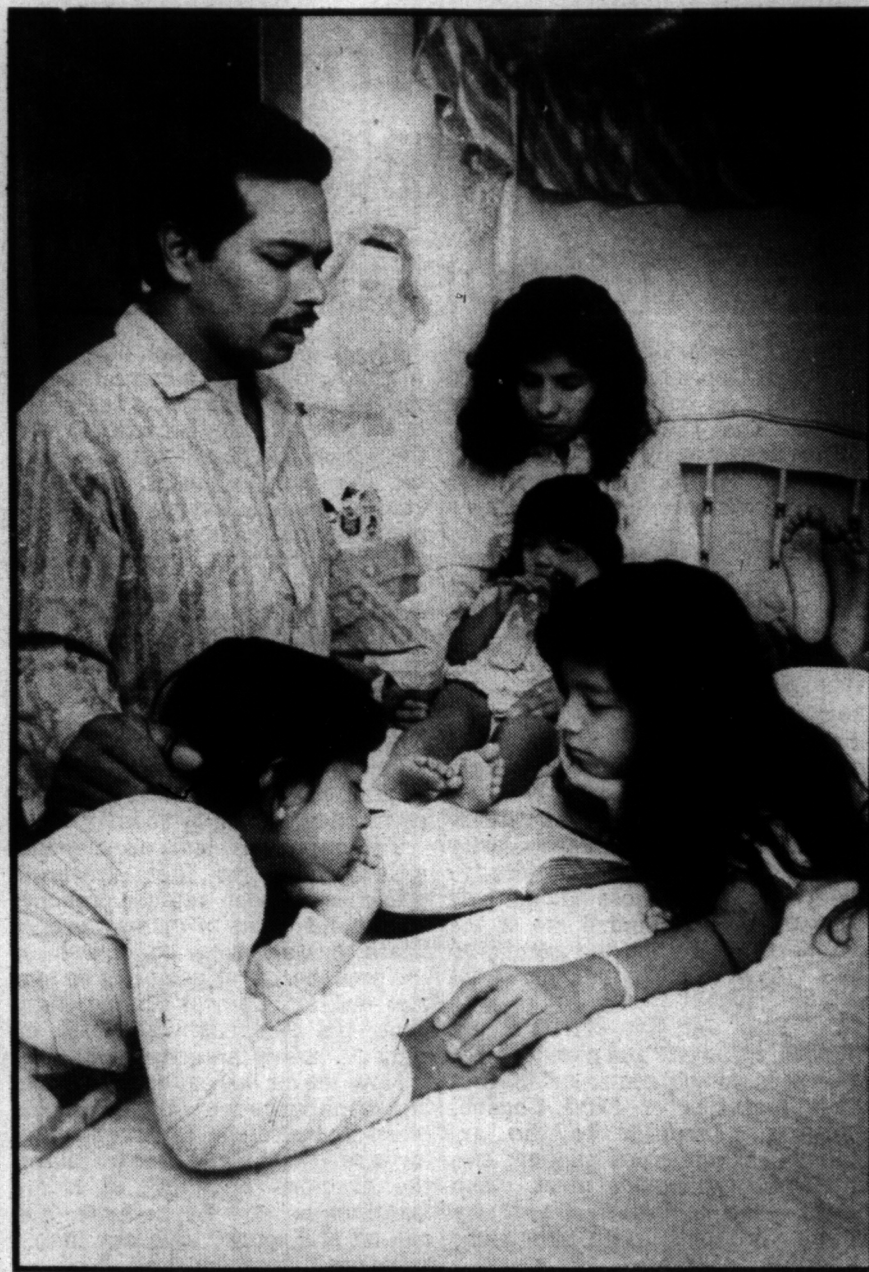
On a park bench near the disaster relief unit sat Billy McDogall, a homeless man who lives on the streets near the Common. McDogall feasted on a meal of chicken and dumplings, sweet peas, sliced peaches, and a drink.

"North Carolina Baptists . . . you've

got to be kidding," McDogall said as he turned and looked to confirm the origin of the large tractor-trailer rig.

In addition to a meal, McDogall was given a gospel tract containing the plan of salvation. McDogall said he knew Jesus as his personal savior already. As for being homeless, the former Navy hospital corpsman remained guarded about how he ended up living on the streets. His only reply, "because of circumstances." For now, he said, it's where he will stay.

As people gathered around the performers, volunteers asked them to complete a "Boston Street Survey" that included questions such as, "What is your definition of a Christian?" and "What prevents you from giving your life to God?"



"We have much to be thankful for"

LONGVIEW, Texas — The Willie Cabrera family makes Thanksgiving a daily practice as they gather for evening devotions before the girls' bedtime. Cabrera is a layman and volunteer pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista in Longview, Texas. He and his wife, Olga, have struggled to build a new life in the United States after moving from El Salvador. "We have been through so much," Olga said, "and God was with us. We have so much to be thankful for." (Photo by Jim Veneman, BSSB.)

Overcoming roadblocks: Navajos translate Bible

By Mark Shaffer

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz., (ABS) — Translating the Bible is never an easy task, and a complex language like Navajo makes it all the more difficult. So for the past six years two Navajos, Tim Begay and his friend, Joe Wilson, a lay pastor, have given their brains a marathon workout as they've worked to translate parts of the Bible into Navajo.

The American Bible Society supports their work and recently published their translation of the Gospel of Mark, titled Mark Bik-ehgo Hane' Ya'at'eehii.

Begay works on the project full-time and Wilson in the summers. The translation task was daunting, "much like trying to mix vinegar with water," they say. Although much revision remains to be done, Begay and Wilson have translated 22 books of the New Testament since beginning the project in 1984.

"I just came across a passage about an iron scepter," Begay said. "Well, Navajo doesn't have any concept about a scepter. But I got to thinking about how in the old days, the hunters had a big, wooden club they would use to throw at rabbits while they were on horseback. So, we used the name of the club in our translation."

Actually, the first complete New Testament in Navajo was published in 1956. It was translated by missionaries in Farmington, N.M.,

assisted by tribal translators. Begay and Wilson are trying to turn the words of the Bible into common-language Navajo.

The Navajo language is so difficult that it was used to confound the Japanese military during World War II. The Japanese were never able to make heads or tails out of radio messages sent by Navajo Code Talkers, who played a huge role in the Allied victory.

Take Mark 14:27, a special verse to traditional Navajos because of their reliance on sheep for food and to provide wool for rug weaving. In English, the verse reads "And Jesus said to them, 'You will all fall away; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered."'"

In Navajo, the same verse reads, "Ako Jesus ahalni, 'T'aa'anoltso shits'aa' yoo'; ahidoolwol, haala bee ak'e'ashchiigo ani, 'Diyin God na'nikaadii yidiyoolheel, ako dibehee da'nilt's'aa'goo alts'o taidoojar.'"

Begay said Colossians was the most difficult book he has translated thus far.

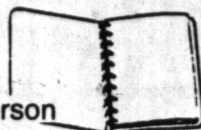
The 34-year-old Begay came from a traditional Navajo background while living in the small community of Pinyon in northeastern Arizona.

"But both of my parents are Christians."

Shaffer is a reporter for the Arizona Republic.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson



The convention as I saw it

The 155th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention will be reflected in history as one of the best. The theme, "That They All May Be One," came dangerously close to being fulfilled. "It's like a long awaited revival" was heard after one prayer session.

"Worship" is the one word to best describe it. The music was uplifting and from the first message by Frank Pollard to the last by Joel Gregory it was holy ground.

Business was conducted, resolutions passed, and budgets sifted even though it was with Christ-like demeanor. It made me proud to be a Mississippi Baptist.

Then there were other observations. You can easily detect the popularity of the coffee pot and the bookstore... the frozen look of those having their picture made reminded me of the passport picture and the agent who said, "If you look like that, you're not able to travel."

Dot Pray and Eva Hart's magic touch on the organ and piano... the cavernous worship center and the first class facilities of First Church, Jackson... orchids to the architect... thunderous singing, two battle-scarred friends meet, clasp hands, then embrace... a pretty young pastor's wife choosing children's books.

The pained expression of a pastor just named to head a committee... the tears of a widow who sat by her husband in so many conventions, now the place and the heart are empty... a former pastor without a church, his eyes saying, "Is there a place for me?" There was big Jerry Clower embracing a man, crutches and all...

John Ira Hill and John Barnes attending their umpteenth convention... more than 50, I know.

An attorney missing several days of practice to be present, a 14-year-old boy drinking it all in... being told by a local wit, "If you get lost in First Baptist, just sit down and a keg-laden rescue dog will be by soon."

The rapturous look on a young wife's face as her husband preaches... soon another preacher shakes his head in dismay over a death message from his church... the preacher turns pastor as he hurries out. Dr. Charles Melton, sight gone, but replaced with 20/20 insight... seeing more than most of us.

I love the ole boy eating a doughnut and drinking coffee while having his blood pressure checked... straight forward preaching of Frank Pollard, the gracious presiding of Eddie Hamilton... and Wayne Long, who can sit still longer than any man I know, was recording it all.

Our hearts were moved by

testimonies: Danny Sparks of Thrasher... cancer, loosing most of his stomach... drew up his funeral plans and found Christ to be real when it comes time to die. Like Hezekiah of old he was granted an extension and said, "In ten months in the valley I discovered more than the previous 27 years."

And how 'bout Eddie Kinchen's testimony... on a dead-end track with a wide-open throttle... and God stepped in and used a Christian businessman to lead him to Christ.

Chaplain's luncheon... being reminded Southern Baptists have 74 chaplains in the Persian Gulf... one reports he has baptized 15 men already... ah, is there any group like those Singing Churchmen... 60 music directors all on key... they even sang "When God Dips His Love In My Heart"... shaped notes and all.

Kay Jones, coach of USM Women's Basketball... the Fellowship of Christian Athletes bringing renewal and now a clear testimony for her Lord... the message from Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board... "Please pray for our world; we are beyond human solution" and Henry Blackaby reminding us it's time to adjust our agenda to God's schedule.

Messengers totalled over 1,800 for the convention. This is the way it looked through the eyes of one.

FMB trustees alter divorce policy for International Service Corps

By Donald D. Martin

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Divorced Southern Baptists' opportunities for overseas mission work were broadened by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees at their Oct. 9-11 meeting.

The trustees approved a recommendation to allow funding for people who are divorced, but otherwise qualified, to work in overseas missions through International Service Corps.

International Service Corps enlists Southern Baptists interested in non-career mission work for terms ranging from four months to two years. The journeyman, Mission Service Corps and special assignment programs now come under the ISC umbrella.

The trustee action provides the possibility of FMB financial support for mission work through ISC by divorced individuals, except for assignments involving theological education or church ministerial staff positions such as pastor, associate pastor, and music minister. Career and associate missionary service will remain closed to divorced people.

The possibility of financial support likely will increase the number of divorced people serving overseas,

since the burden of having to bear one's total support has been difficult for many, said Tim Brendle, associate vice president of the board's mission personnel office. All ISC applicants are asked to consider supplying as much of their own financial support as possible, he said.

Since 1979, about 40 divorced Southern Baptists have worked in overseas missions through the Foreign Mission Board, but have had to provide their own financial support. Divorced people also have worked overseas through the board's volunteer department, which channels Southern Baptists into mission work for terms of four months or less.

Members of a special board committee studying the divorce policy said they were "uncomfortable with independent financial support as the distinguishing qualification" for approval of otherwise qualified divorced people to work in missions through ISC.

"This seemed neither biblical nor fair," stated a report from the committee. "Neither did it seem consistent with the practices of churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention where people with a history of divorce are widely permitted to serve in support roles." The committee said

most local churches noted a distinction between ministerial and support roles for divorced individuals' service.

The committee said divorced people should be considered for selected overseas ministries in ISC because the program usually helps fill support roles. Also, ISC terms are shorter than career and associate missionary positions, which remain closed to divorced people.

Last February trustees voted to continue the mission board's longstanding policy of not appointing divorced people as career and associate missionaries. That action followed a yearlong study by a committee of staff and trustees. The study was in response to a motion adopted at the 1988 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting calling for an evaluation of the mission board's divorce policy.

After the February vote the divorce committee began studying the ISC's divorce policy. The trustees listed several guidelines for ISC administrators

The guidelines state that administrators should consider the circumstances of an applicant's divorce and his or her current family situation.

Martin writes for FMB

An Urgent Call

I knew when the call came it would be at a strange moment. Women are completely without regard to schedules or even the hour. I recall when our first child was born. For six previous months my wife repeatedly was told that Ole Miss was playing Tulane that day in October but that September or even early November would be fine. His birthday is October 23.

It was the second day of the state convention right between the adoption of the budget and the report of the Committee on Nominations. A secretary, without comment, delivered the note. Whatever it was, I figured it would wait; besides that, my friend Rex Yancey would be preaching in a few minutes.

Casualty, with the worried frown inherent to most editors, I scanned the note. "Your wife said call the hospital." When McArthur said, "I shall return," I never budged. Even when our governor said "get out and vote," I didn't go 'til late that afternoon. However, with all the importance I could muster, the summons was answered immediately.

Sometime that morning, about the time Jack Winscott was giving the Board of Ministerial Education report, our daughter Pat (Mrs. Joseph Pardue) gave birth to twin girls, Julianna and Haley, combining for over 10 pounds of babyhood, may not be two of the prettiest ever born, but I doubt if I'd ever be convinced otherwise. In that recovery room amidst all the hugging, crying, and loving, we shared a prayer of thanksgiving. Pat is recovering nicely and I'm sure, in due time, the editor will do likewise.

OTHER CONVENTIONS

Virginia

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Virginia Baptists registered in record numbers for the 167th annual meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in Richmond Nov. 13-14. The latest official count of 4,738 messengers represents the largest registration in history.

Messengers elected Michael J. Oblinger, a 39-year old gastroenterologist from Charlottesville, president.

Messengers adopted the 1991 Virginia Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget totaling \$16,300,000, the same budget goal as last year. However, the 1991 budget represents a change in percentage allocations to cooperative missions in Virginia and to world mission causes in the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget.

The distribution will be 64.5 percent for Virginia cooperative missions and 34.5 percent for world mission causes. The principal change, in addition to the percentage allocation, will be reflected in the manner in which the 34.5 percent is to be distributed. One-half of the 34.5 percent, \$2,776,100, will be distributed according to the formula adopted by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans last June.

The additional \$2,776,100 will be allocated by designation as follows: Foreign Mission Board: \$1,611,950; Home Mission Board: \$620,000; Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs: \$75,000; Annuity Board: \$25,000; Baptist World Alliance: \$100,000; Associated Baptist Press: \$60,000; Partnership Missions: \$134,150; and theological support for Virginia Baptist students attending a Southern Baptist seminary: \$150,000.

Georgia

SAVANNAH, Ga. (BP) — While avoiding a pattern of debate and controversy, Georgia Baptists met for their 169th annual session in Savannah Nov. 12-14. Truett Gannon, pastor of Smoke Rise Church in Stone Mountain, was elected president.

Gannon, who was perceived as the candidate of GBC moderates, said he hoped to continue the healing process that he felt had begun under outgoing president Reighard, who had been considered conservative.

In addition to the rhetoric among convention leaders, certain actions were perceived as signs of reconciliation. The committee on nominations, chaired by James Merritt, pastor of First Church of Snellville, brought a report that was hailed by many as a return to balance in representing the broad spectrum of diversity among Georgia Baptists.

The convention approved a record \$32.4 million Cooperative Program unified budget that will continue to divide missions gifts 50-50 between state and national causes after allocating funds for retirement programs for Georgia Baptist ministers.

South Carolina

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP) — South Carolina Baptist Convention, meeting Nov. 13-14 in Columbia, voted to escrow 1991 money budgeted for Furman University, approved a name change of Baptist College at Charleston to Charleston Southern University, and affirmed the general board's plans to sell the Baptist Building in downtown Columbia to build a new facility two miles away.

The convention also approved a task force recommendation to keep the division of Cooperative Program unified budget mission funds for South Carolina and Southern Baptist Convention causes at the current 60-40 percentage level until churches increase their Cooperative Program support.

The messengers voted for a three-year special mission partnership between South Carolina and New England Baptists beginning in 1991.

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Pastors' conference — a pre-convention treat

By Guy Henderson

"The Church Triumphant" was the theme as the Mississippi Baptist Pastors' Conference met on Nov. 12 in Jackson. J. Roy McComb, First Church, Columbia, president, presided over the meeting and Bill Bacon, First Church, Clinton, led the music.

Stan Fornea, pastor, First Church, Cleveland, began by declaring the task of the pastor is not to alter the gospel to make it attractive. The purist view of the gospel, unchanged through the years, demands that the church proclaim the authoritative and truthful message.

The shepherd or pastor was the topic for Ken Alford of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. He declared the priority of his love and the proof of his love indicates we are not to drive the sheep but feed them. Alford said the Lord's interest in shepherds is evidenced by the acceptance of Abel, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, and of Christ's manifestation as the Chief Shepherd.

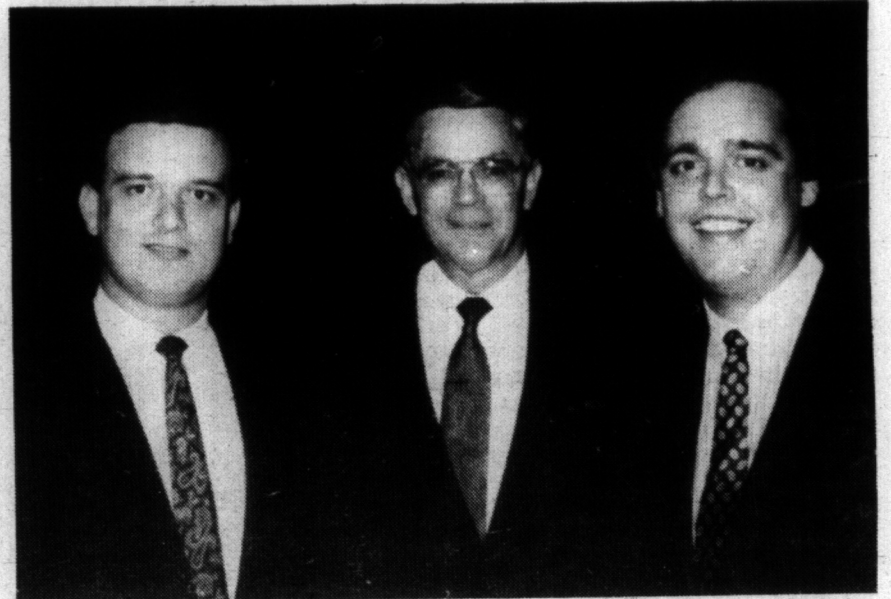
Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and pastor, First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, spoke on the open door which God can open and no man can shut or God can close and no man can open. The future is in God's hand and we are to be faithful where God places us, he said. The Kosciusko native also told of the revival in Kenya and assisting in baptizing 56,000 in the Indian Ocean. Concerning the convention, Chapman declared, we must find a way to walk together. We are all in it together. It's a critical time for the SBC, but we cannot compromise the Word, he added. "If we are overly impressed by the praise of men, then we will be overly impressed by the criticism of man." Chapman closed by saying the message of Christ in Revelation is, "You have kept my word, my name; now I will keep you."

Stirring music by the Morrison Heights choir and orchestra, Mike Parks, director, led off the closing ser-

vice. Dean Register, pastor, First Church, Gulfport, spoke on "The Power of the Church." He declared the church cannot avoid criticism. We are besieged by woodpeckers on the outside and termites on the inside and need an infusion of God's power, he noted. Register proclaimed that prayer is the difference between a dying church and a dynamic church.

Fred Wolfe of Mobile, Ala., closed the session, speaking on performance or position. He said if we depend on performance we will be undone, unhappy, and the devil will constantly be accusing us. However, he declared, our position in Christ, behind the veil, will give us boldness and confidence.

New officers for the coming year will be Dwight Smith, West Ellisville Church, Ellisville, president; Ken Alford, vice-president; and John Brock, First Church, Pearl, secretary-treasurer.



These are the Pastors' Conference officers. From left, they are John Brock, secretary, pastor of First Church, Pearl; Dwight Smith, president, pastor of West Ellisville Church, Ellisville; and Ken Alford, vice president, pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

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MBC re-elects Hamilton, adopts \$21 million budget

By Tim Nicholas

Mississippi Baptists in annual convention, passed a 1991 budget of nearly \$21 million, re-elected their president, Eddie Hamilton, for a second term, passed resolutions encouraging that more dialogue be scheduled during sessions of the SBC and that the Baptist Faith and Message statement "provides adequate guidance for Mississippi Baptists."

Messengers to the Mississippi Baptist Convention, totaling 1,881, and meeting Nov. 13-14 at Jackson's First Church, voted a 1991 Cooperative Program budget of \$20,949,962 to go toward missions, Christian higher education, and benevolent work.

A total of 37 percent of this amount will go to Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes, an increase of one half of one percent over that sent from the 1990 budget.

Of the budget staying in the state, a total of \$4,288,000 goes to Mississippi College, William Carey College, and Blue Mountain College.

A challenge budget of \$500,000 will send the first \$250,000 of any overage to Christian education through the Education Commission and the rest will be allocated at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Messengers re-elected Eddie Hamilton, pastor of Oak Forest Church, Jackson, unopposed, to a second one-year term as their presi-

dent. First vice president is Kiely Young, pastor of First Church, Greenville. The only office to receive more than one nomination was that of second vice president. Ed Deuschle, pastor of First Church, Pontotoc, and Patrick Pfrimmer, pastor of Tooms Church, were nominated. In balloting, Deuschle won, 384 to 201.

Messengers elected J.W. Brister, director of missions for Hinds-Madison Association, as recording secretary, succeeding J. Clark (See **ADOPTS** on page 4)

"Don't let the light go out in Mississippi"

By Tim Nicholas

Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, addressed the issue of fundamentalism in his report to messengers of the convention.

Causey said that John was talking in Revelation about Christians who shine as "light in the world." Asked Causey, "Could it be the reason so many of us feel so much of the stress nowadays is because the light's gone out?"

He said "Let us return to our first love before the flickering light goes out."

Causey told the group "Enough of controversy, criticism, name calling divisions, schism, ambition, personal goals, aspirations to be the ruling party... where is Jesus in all that?"

Said Causey, "I'm not a fundamentalist, but I'm fundamental. I believe the Bible is perfect. I'm not trying to use buzz words. I'm not talking about the original autographs (but) the Bible I've got in my hand. We can't afford, as some are willing to do, to kill off the scholars... even if you kill somebody with a Bible, it's still murder... let's be fundamental, but let's don't be fundamentalists."

Mississippians, as Causey said he has known them for 59 years, "are not ready for fundamentalism, but they are fundamental." He said Mississippians are raised in a genteel manner. When someone comes to town in nice

clothes and good manners, "it never dawns on us somebody's out to get us."

He said that "fundamentalism's got a streak we're not familiar with." He said it hurts professors, destroys their careers, demeans scholarship...

Said Causey, "If the rest of the country puts out the light, don't let the light go out in Mississippi."

Following Causey's message, messengers were called to prayer by M. L. "Buddy" Dodson of Bay St. Louis, who called for people to "lose or veneer of righteousness."



The Mississippi Baptist Convention officers are, from left, Ed Deuschle, second vice president, pastor of First Church, Pontotoc; J. W. Brister, recording secretary, director of missions for Hinds-Madison Association; Eddie Hamilton, president, pastor of Oak Forest Church, Jackson; Levon Moore, assistant recording secretary, retired director of missions for Attala Association; and Kiely Young, first vice president, pastor of First Church, Greenville.



Pictured are the newly-elected officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. From left, they are President Eugene Dobbs, pastor of First Church, Philadelphia; Vice President Rex Yancey, pastor of First Church, Quitman; and P. J. Scott, pastor of First Church, Olive Branch. These three also serve on the Executive Committee. Others elected to the Executive Committee by members of the board are Ben Carlisle, Jackson County; Clarence Cooper, Grenada; Cornell Daughtry, Sunflower; Ingram Foster, Jeff Davis; Jim Futral, Hinds-Madison; Martin Hayden, Itawamba; Gene Henderson, Rankin; Ed Holmes, Gulf Coast; Gus Merritt, Newton; Larry Otis, Lee; Truman Scarborough, Yalobusha; David Sellers, Lauderdale; and Tommy Tutor, North Delta.

CONVENTION SERMON

What shall we be?

By Eddie Hamilton

In one of the greatest summit meetings ever held, God the Father and Christ the Son looked through the corridors of time down through the intervening ages, laying out a plan and a program by which the world would be offered reconciliation to God, through his Son the Lord Jesus Christ. The closing moments of that summit reveal the prayer which Jesus prayed. He prayed for the church, from Pentecost until his blessed coming again. In this prayer he prayed for every believer who has ever lived and ever shall live. This prayer includes all Southern Baptists. It includes all Mississippi Baptists. It includes you and me.

John began his gospel account by declaring that the eternal God has become flesh for the purpose of revealing the Father to his creation in terms of their own understanding. In event by event John pictures the revealed love of God in his Son Jesus. The world for the most part had rejected that revelation. Some did believe and separated themselves from the world. He has trained these to carry on in his absence. His teaching and life are about to end. However, the greatest revelation of his love is still in the future. Before the sun would set on another day, the world would see and know that God did truly love the world and had sent his Son. Please read with me or listen as I read John 17: 20-23. This is the prayer Jesus prayed for you and me before he died.

John 17:20-23

The question in the hearts of Southern Baptists today is, "What shall we be?" The answers to that question are numerous and multifaceted. Some people have no answer. Some have many answers and ideas. Some we understand and some are difficult to understand.

In addition to how you answer this question, there is also your reaction. Some persons are nonchalant and passive. Some are open and receiving in their response. Others become impassioned and even angry in their responses.

I pose for you the question, "What shall we be?" I offer three responses to that question which I have taken from the final words of the prayer Jesus prayed for you and me.

I. ONE IN SPIRIT (HOLY)

What shall we be? One in Spirit! Sanctify is a key word in the context of Jesus' prayer. Jesus prayed to his Father that his followers might be sanctified through his truth. Truth comes through the perfect revelations of God in his living Word and in his spoken Word. Sanctify has different meanings depending on its usage. Sanctify comes from the Latin sanctus which means holy. Sanctus comes from the Greek hagios. When the verb is used in reference to things it means to set apart for spiritual purposes; when used in relationship to persons, it describes the process of making one holy.

The holiness of God is a major concept of Old Testament theology and it carries over into the New Testament. Holiness is the essence of God's character. In Isaiah 6, the seraphs of heaven cried out, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts." His holiness is confirmed by the heavenly beings in Revelation 4 as the four living creatures surrounding the throne sing "Holy, holy, holy . . . Lord God Almighty." Holiness is the term used to speak of God's Spirit in the New Testament, where his Spirit is called the Holy Spirit. If holiness speaks of God's nature, then we have fellowship with him when we become like him. Holiness is the basis of our fellowship with God and with our fellow-man.

The problems that come in our relationship



Hamilton

with God and others is a lack of our willingness to faith God. The answer to man's desire for fellowship with God is to receive of God into his life. The problem in fellowship with one another is our lack of holiness. The gigantic problem in fellowship is an unwillingness to deny ourselves and completely identify with Jesus. Jesus had this process in mind when he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

The people to whom Jesus spoke knew that the cross was the instrument of death. However, before a person died, he was forced to bear his cross through the marketplace. It completely identified him as one who had broken a Roman law. This was Rome's way of saying, "He is wrong; we are right." His cross became both his indictment and his identity. Jesus in the beautiful language of the metaphor is saying to us that in order to become like him we must be willing to indict ourselves before the world and completely identify ourselves as his followers. May our Father unite us to himself and to each other as we become holy.

II. ONE IN FELLOWSHIP (LOVING)

Someone has described fellowship as two fellows in the same ship. If one floats, they both float; if one sinks, they both sink.

Fellowship is the sharing of life. The greatest and most important fellowship we have is with the Heavenly Father and his Son Jesus. Secondary to that fellowship is the fellowship we have with each other. Holiness is the basis of fellowship. Love is the motivator of fellowship. Love is more than a feeling or obligation; it is an activity. Love is a transitive verb that requires an object. Then there is a obligatory response to that object. The response must be consistent with love for the love to be genuine. Jesus gave us the command to love as the action necessary for fellowship. He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, soul, and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." For love to be of God it must be directed first of all toward God, to others, and then to self.

Everyone is not loving and everyone does not

agree. It has been said that where there are two Baptists there will be at least three opinions. Jesus healed three blind men. Each was healed in a different manner. Someone imagined that these men got together and the following scenario ensues. They began discussing who had healed them and how they were healed. They discovered that Jesus had healed all of them. Next they discovered to their dismay and discomfort that each claimed to have been healed in a different way. One insisted that he was simply touched; another insisted that Jesus made a poultice out of spittle and clay and applied it to his eyes; the third disagreed with the other two and insisted that the correct way for a blind man to be healed was for Jesus to apply spittle only to the eyes.

Each insisted that he was correct and that his way was the only way to be healed. After heated discussion and disagreement and each insisting that the Lord could only heal in one way they parted ways, and, according to informed sources, three denominations were begun: the touchites, the mudites, and the spittites.

The church is made up of people with different ideas and opinions. People have different convictions. That is why we have Democrats and Republicans; conservatives and liberals; Baptists and Methodists, chocolate and vanilla ice cream.

Diversity is healthy in society. It is also healthy in the context of truth within a church and a denomination. If everyone thinks as I do, then you are unnecessary. Baptists have always been a diverse group of people. It is out of this diversity that we have been made strong.

The problem comes when we allow Satan to exploit our differences to the point of divisiveness. Paul faced this problem in the Corinthian Church. In I Corinthians 1:12, he lists four factions within that church. He lists the Paul group, the Apollos group, the Cephas group, and the Christ group. The division came because each pushed a point of truth to the point of exclusiveness. The Paul group evidently thought of themselves as superior because Paul was their preacher. Paul emphasized grace and love, and they loved his message. The Apollos group was more of an intellectual group. They loved the eloquence and thoughtful preaching of Apollos. The Cephas group were probably the legalists of the church. They were Christians, but loved the emphasis on the Old Testament. The fourth group was the Christ group. This was probably the worst group of all. They were claiming to be the true group of Christians within the church. There are at least three kinds of Baptists. There is the half-Baptist, the Baptist, and the Baptist-and-a-half. The first is only partially committed. The second is the average Baptist; and the third is the Baptist who thinks he is a half-Baptist better than everyone else.

III. ONE IN MISSION (COMMITTED)

Holiness is the basis of our unity. Love is the motivator toward unity. The result of holiness and love is evidenced by the world as they see Christ in us and come to know him. What shall we be? One in Spirit (holy); one in fellowship (loving); and, one in mission (committed).

Locally, each Baptist church is a local autonomous body of Christ. Every Baptist church is independent. Each Baptist church is free before God. With freedom comes responsibility.

Each church has the responsibility of faithfulness in commitment to Christ. Jesus

said, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Notice that he did not say; "You will build my church," or, "I will build your church." The church belongs to the Lord Jesus. So he should be able to have done with it what he wills. He wills that the church be in the offensive mode bombarding the gates of hell. Hell is assaulted as Christians love God and one another in such a way that the world will see and desire what we have. Hell is assaulted as we receive the Word of God into our lives and have our lives changed. Hell is assaulted when we stop living for the devil and start living for God. Hell is assaulted as we snatch from the jaws of sin and death precious souls that are bound for hell. Our churches need to be committed to holiness, to loving one another, to building up the body of saints, to reaching lost people for Jesus.

In Mississippi we have almost 2,000 Baptist churches. We join together to do jointly that which we cannot do individually.

These churches have almost 675,000 members. We join together in prayer to support our Lord's work. We give of our time to be involved in missions. We give our money to be sent where we cannot go. Mississippi Baptists that I know are conservative Bible-believing Baptists.

Dr. L. R. Scarbrough's son said to him, "Daddy, I just don't believe the Bible anymore."

He said to him, "How's that?" He said, "I don't believe that a fish could swallow a man and the man stay alive for three days."

He said to his son, "Son, you don't believe that God could prepare a fish that could swallow a man and keep him alive for three days?"

The son replied, "Well, I guess if you are going to bring God into it I can believe it." Mississippi Baptists that I know insist on bringing God into every account of life, including his Word. We believe in a perfect revelation of God, both in his written Word, the Bible, and in his living Word, the Lord Jesus. We believe in Adam and Eve; that God can part the waters of the Red Sea; that a donkey can talk; that an ax-head can float; that a fish can swallow a man and keep him alive for three days; that God can and did choose to come to earth in the form of a man Christ Jesus; that he died and arose again on the third day; that he ascended to heaven and that he is coming again to redeem his people.

In Mississippi, we need to continue to keep our eyes on Jesus. We need to continue to love and receive one another. We need to stop getting angry with our brothers and sisters if they don't act like we think they should and if they don't say things like we think they ought to. We need to stop insisting that everyone act and have the same opinions we have. We need to stop insisting that people use the terminology in saying things that we use. On the other hand, we should be willing to say things as they do if it will promote fellowship and unity. We need to draw the circle large enough in our convention to include all Mississippi Baptists who are Baptists in Word and deed. We need less of Us and Them and more of Oneness.

In the United States and around the world we must reaffirm and recommit ourselves to reaching the world for Christ. Those who know say that a new light is beginning to shine in America and around the world. We need more who are willing to commit themselves and their resources to the cause of Christ.

Hamilton is president of the MBC and pastor of Oak Forest Church, Jackson.

Ten churches, associations lead in study course awards

The top 10 churches and associations leading the state in Church Study Course awards:

| Churches | Pastors | Associations | DOMs |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Calvary Union | Doug Broome | Hinds-Madison | J. W. Brister |
| New Zion | G. A. McCoy | Lebanon | Joel Ray |
| First, Hattiesburg | Carl E. Hayes | Jackson | Ernest Sadler |
| | Randy Von Kanel | Pearl River | Ken Rhodes |

| Churches | Pastors |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| First, Pascagoula | Dennis L. Johnsey |
| Roseland Park | James L. Spencer |
| First, Jackson | Frank D. Pollard |
| Temple | Gary G. Berry |
| New Hope | Richard E. Wilson |
| First, Clinton | Bill R. Baker |

| Associations |
|--------------|
| Rankin |
| Lauderdale |
| Lee |
| Wayne |
| Monroe |
| Gulf Coast |

| DOMs |
|-----------------|
| J. C. Renfroe |
| Leon B. Young |
| W. P. Smith III |
| Lynn Mackey |
| Rick Spencer |
| Bobby Perry |

American Family to defend brothers

TUPELO, MS — The American Family Association Law Center will defend two brothers in a suit brought against them by the State of Massachusetts because they refuse to rent an apartment to an unmarried couple — Paul and Ronald Desilets.

OTHER CONVENTIONS

Nevada

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP) — Messengers to the 12th Nevada Baptist Convention annual meeting Oct. 23-24 adopted a \$1.7 million budget and elected Michael Rochelle as president.

Messengers adopted without change the 1991 budget of \$1,728,265, an increase of 5.15 percent over the 1990 budget. The budget reflects an increase from 24.5 percent to 25 percent of the budget going to the Cooperative Program unified budget for mission and educational causes.

Rochelle is pastor of West Oakey Church, Las Vegas, Nevada's largest church and largest giver through the Cooperative Program.

First Southern Baptist Church of Las Vegas was named church of the year. In a resolution the church was cited as having been in the forefront of missions development in the southern Nevada area for 35 years; having been a statewide leader in Cooperative Program giving, baptisms and membership increases; and having been an encouragement to sister Southern Baptist churches in Nevada.

Hawaii

HONOLULU (BP) — The Hawaii Baptist Convention meeting in annual session at the Korean Baptist Church of Honolulu approved a record \$2 million budget and elected a pastor, two laymen, and a church staff member as officers.

The convention's budget in excess of \$2 million was adopted with 28.90 percent of undesignated funds to be forwarded to the SBC for the Cooperative Program unified budget. This is an increase of 0.65 percent over 1990.

The new convention president is Kenneth Newman, pastor of Hawaii Kai Church.

A strategic plan for the 1990s was adopted under the theme of Mission: Hawaii 2000, Phase I 1991-95. It included priorities of growing churches and starting churches. Among several specific goals were proposals to baptize 4,000 people, begin 30 new congregations, attain a total membership of 20,000, and raise \$5 million to purchase 10 new church sites over the next five years.

Michigan

GARDEN CITY, Mich. (BP) — The Baptist State Convention of Michigan met in its 33rd annual meeting Nov. 6-8 at Merriman Road Church in Garden City.

The 280 messengers adopted a budget of \$2,667,135 with \$1,106,444 to come from the Michigan churches. Of the Michigan contributions, 30 percent will be forwarded to the Cooperative Program unified budget. This is the 20th year the convention has increased contributions to worldwide causes by 0.5 percent.

Re-elected president of the convention was Mike Lee, pastor of Columbia Avenue Church in Pontiac.

Convention participants honored Robert Wilson who has been executive director of the convention for the past 20 years.

Pennsylvania/South Jersey

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. (BP) — A record 420 messengers and visitors celebrated 20 years of Southern Baptist work in Pennsylvania/South Jersey Nov. 8-10 at the Country and Town Church in Mechanicsburg.

Charles Teague, host pastor, was re-elected president by acclamation. Following a debate on an alternate motion, the 1991 budget was approved. The alternate motion asked that no funds be allowed for the use of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. It was defeated 145-41.

The Cooperative Program unified budget part of the 1991 budget of \$629,361 is a reduction of the 1990 figure in an attempt to bring the budget into line with receipts from the churches.

District of Columbia

WASHINGTON (BP) — Anticipating a serious budget deficit in the current year and following, District of Columbia Baptist Convention leaders announced formation of a special 16-person task force of budget, reorganization, and structure/staffing at the annual meeting Nov. 8-9.

The task force, approved by the executive board in October, will have the responsibility of studying a broad range of convention-related issues. The task force is mandated to present its short-term recommendations to the executive committee by Feb. 21, 1991, and its long-term recommendations by early April 1991.

Until this fall, the D.C. convention has been the only state convention in which member churches could designate all their contributions. A significant number of churches follow that practice, and thus the percentage going to the Cooperative Program unified budget principally has been determined by the churches. The percentage given to the Cooperative Program and its counterpart in the American Baptist Churches USA (the D.C. convention is aligned with both the ABC and SBC) in 1990 is 32.23 percent and it is anticipated the percentage will continue at about that percentage in 1991.

Meeting in Montgomery Hills Church in Silver Spring, Md., the convention honored its executive director, James A. Langley, and his wife. The November convention marked Langley's 20th year in the post.

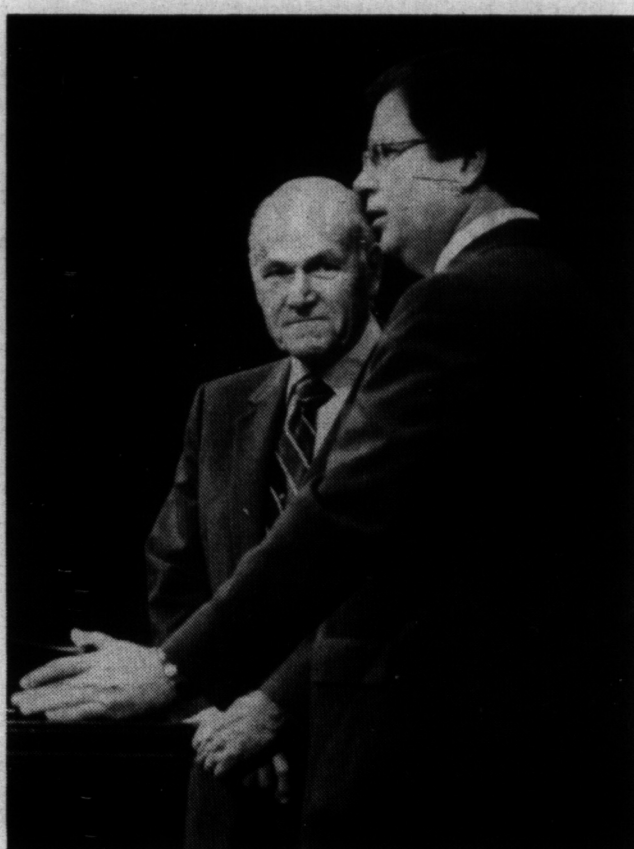
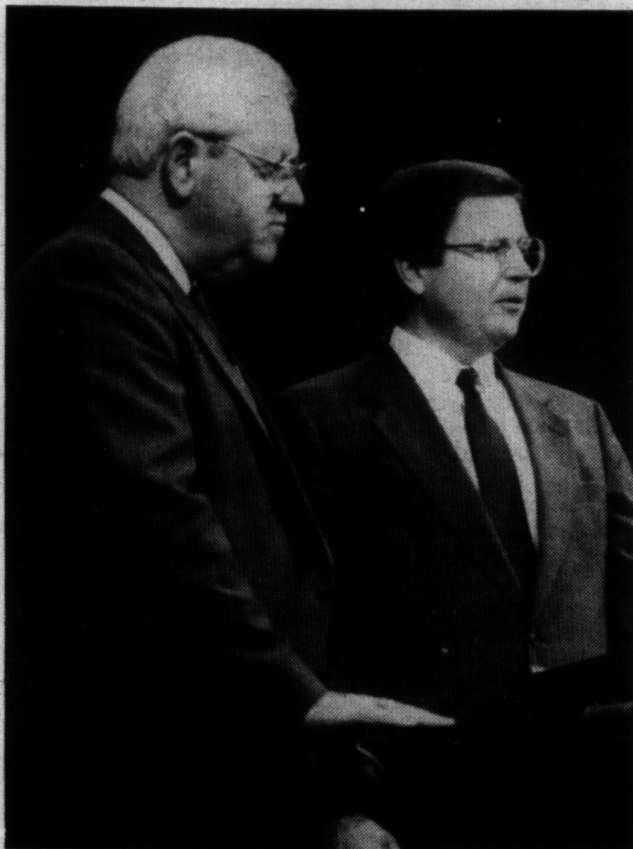
Alabama

MOBILE, Ala. (BP) — Meeting at Cottage Hill Church in Mobile, Nov. 13-14, Alabama Baptists elected Rick Lance, pastor of First Church of Tuscaloosa, president and passed, without question or opposition, a 1991 budget of \$27,350,000.

Lance, who called himself "unaligned" in terms of political factions, said he believes in the "fundamentals of the faith."

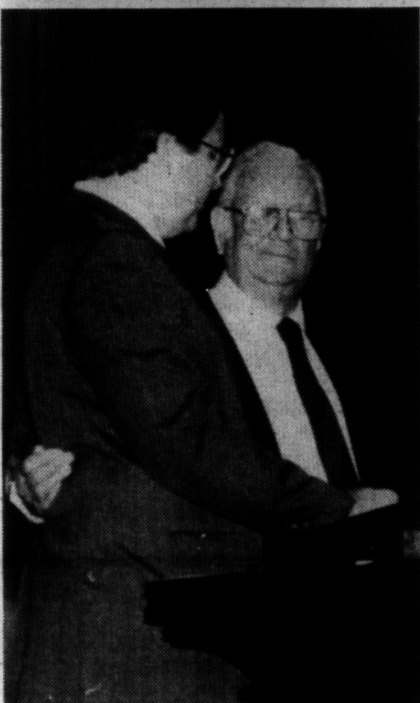
The \$27 million budget reflects a 2.7 percent increase over last year's budget, but a 5.7 percent increase over projected receipts for 1990.

(See **CONVENTIONS** on page 9)



Convention week

Eddie Hamilton, president, Mississippi Baptist Convention, above, recognizes Chester Vaughn, left, who is retiring as program director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and Don McGregor, right, who is retiring as editor of the **Baptist Record** and who has been named editor emeritus.



Eddie Hamilton recognizes J. Clark Hensley, right, who is retiring as family ministry consultant, Discipleship Training Department, MBCB.



The Celebration Choir of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, sings during the pastors' conference, directed by Mike Parks, minister of music.

Lottie Moon offerings demonstrate commitment to Great Commission

By Anne W. McWilliams

Two Mississippi pastors — Frank Pollard of First Church, Jackson, and Bob Self of First Church, Brookhaven — were among 41 Southern Baptist pastors who joined Foreign Mission Board trustees and others in Richmond, Va., Oct. 9 for an overview and dialogue about the board's world evangelism plans.

The idea for highlighting Southern Baptist work overseas to stimulate missions giving was initiated by Foreign Mission Board trustee chairman Bill Hancock, pastor of Highview Church, Louisville, Ky.

In an interview with Art Toalston, FMB writer, Hancock said there was "no real design" to the list of pastors invited. It included about 70 pastors he knows from across the country and others suggested by the Foreign Mission Board staff.

Hancock said he hopes Southern Baptist churches will aim for a 10 percent increase in their giving this year to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. He said his church in Louisville will aim for a 10 percent increase over its Lottie Moon Offering of \$50,500 last year.

Morris Chapman, SBC president and pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, who was also at the meeting, said his congregation has adopted the 10 percent increase goal, to top the \$56,614 it gave last year.

Concerning the Richmond meeting, Frank Pollard of First Church, Jackson, said, "It was a joy to me to be involved in the Foreign Mission Board meeting because I represent a family of faith committed to the Great Commission. So long as our Southern Baptist effort is the best way to obey our Lord's mandate, we will be part of it." Last year, his church, the top giver to Lottie Moon in Mississippi, surpassed its goal of \$161,000, and this year has set a goal of \$165,000. Pollard said that in his church "the missions organizations give outstanding leadership to missions support."

Bob Self, pastor of First Church, Brookhaven, another of Mississippi's best supporters of the Lottie Moon Offering, said, "It is my opinion that the strongest thing to be done in foreign missions fund raising is for the pastor to consistently teach missions, promote missions from the pulpit, be in-

involved in both domestic and foreign missions in a personal way, and to have the courage to dream big in challenging his people to give. This method has helped our church to raise its foreign missions giving about 400 percent over 10 years, from the twenties in 1980 to nearly \$80,000 last year. At First Church, Brookhaven, our commitment is steadfast. I do not know how our people will respond this year. I do know that they will be challenged."

One statement from the Richmond meeting, Self recalled, particularly impressed him, about the need to support the Lottie Moon Offering. It came from one of the area leaders: "We were told that by the year 2000 there would be 100 different areas of the world where we needed to be sharing the gospel that would be closed to career missionaries. I have long believed that the time will come when we have plenty of money for foreign missions, but nowhere to send missionaries. We must do it now."

The goal this year for LMCO is \$86,000,000. Mississippi's goal is \$5,000,000.

A heart for God

By Rex Yancey

1 Sam. 13:13-14; 1 Sam. 16:7

The historical situation surrounding my text today grew out of a vacuum out of which God's people opted to have a king. The apt description of this vacuum can be found in this phrase, "There was no frequent vision." Men did not hear the word of God and the people lost sight of the high ideal of the theocracy. This was the beginning of the ruin of the kingdom itself.

Washington Irving said, "There is a certain relief in change, even though it be from bad to worse; as I have found in traveling in a stagecoach, it is often a comfort to shift one's position and be bruised in a new place."

Lannie Wilbourn wrote in his Sunday School lessons for *The Baptist Record*, "Israel's leaders wanted a king much as other nations have. They were about to be bruised in a new place. The solution to any problem a Christian has is never to become more like a pagan."

The Bible has its version of rags to riches. People who were nobody to men became somebody to God. These men were not born as great men of God. They were not elected by men to become great men of God. God took them through a process that led them to a deeper relationship with him.

Israel selected Saul. They were tired of the theocracy. They were tired of God working through judges, priests, and prophets. They were tired of the invisible. They wanted a king they could see on a throne. They wanted a king who was mighty in battle, big in stature, and a military leader. It is easy to observe that they wanted to elect a man because of outward characteristics. The record of their selection of Saul is found in 1 Samuel 9, verse 2. He was a tall and handsome man. He looked good. He acted bad.

God rejected Saul. He was a man's man, but he was not God's man. He was a sorry spiritual example. He did things his way, disobeying direct commands from God. 1 Samuel 15:24 records the fact that he disobeyed the voice of God because he feared the people and listened to their voice.

God cannot use anyone who directly disobeys him and fears people more than God. Therefore, God ultimately rejected Saul's leadership.

Israel selected Saul, but God elected David. He was not chosen because of his outward appearance. He was chosen because of his heart. All of Jesse's sons were brought before Samuel. He had some fine looking boys, but they were not the chosen of God.

So much of our choosing is from external features. We choose employees, friends, and mates on the basis of appearance. James Dobson has written in *Hide and Seek* that the most important asset a person can have in America is his physical attractiveness. Writers in Hollywood have made a fortune out of this concept. There is the Ugly Duckling who turned into the beautiful swan, Sleeping Beauty, Dumbo the Elephant, and Rudolph the Rednosed Reindeer. We look on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. We package, perform, project, promote, and pretend. When we are through, we have something in which God has no interest.

We project our reputation. People are able to perceive what they think we are. Character is what God knows we are. Character is what we are like when no one is watching.

Both Saul and David were sinners,

but the difference in them was the attitude of their hearts. David repented when he sinned and Saul kept on trucking.

I want us to take a brief look at David's heart this morning.

I. David had a courageous heart.

In 1 Samuel 17:47, we need to see more than a little guy against a big guy. We need to see the people of God against those who were not the people of God. Goliath snubbed the living God for the worship of fish and flies.

There is an intellectual battle going on today for the minds of men. It is a defiant challenge from our arch-enemy the devil. My dear brother and sister, we must not turn on each other. There is a moral battle going on in this world that is against every piece of truth we have ever stood for. We must not turn on each other. Goliath went 40 days with no takers. He was getting more confident with every passing day. The morale of God's people was low. We must not turn on each other. We must protect the honor of God.

We must not acquiesce to that which is comfortable and profitable. We must, like David, regardless of what others say, be preoccupied with God's glory. David had a heart for God. It was a courageous heart.

We need courage for these challenging days. We need a heart of courage. This is no time for retreat.

II. David had a compassionate heart.

A. David loved God.

Psalms 18:1, "I love Thee, O Lord, my strength."

Psalms 116:1, "I love the Lord, because he hears my voice and my supplications."

Stuart Briscoe in his book *David: A Heart for God* gives the essence of David's love. All human love must be rooted in our love for the Lord. David looked at Jonathan and Saul and his nation through the eyes of God.

1. He loved God with his heart. The heart was the center of a person's being in the Old Testament. Therefore, to love God with the heart was to discern the truth about him.

Psalms 116:5, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yes, our God is compassionate." David's love for the Lord can be seen in his allowing the spirit to give him discernment.

2. David loved God with his soul. The soul indicates volitional desire. With the heart David discerned his truth. With his soul he desired to please and thank him.

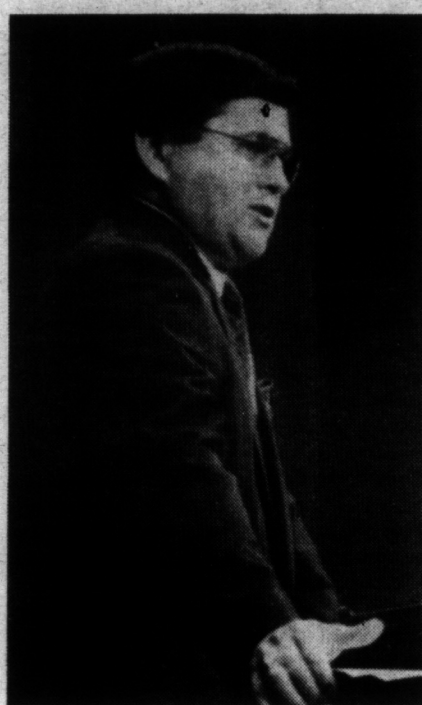
3. David loved God with his might. We are to love God with everything we have. Our obedience to his commands is the essence of the demonstration of our love for him. "If you love me, keep my commandments."

B. David loved Jonathan.

1 Samuel 18:1, "Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself." Jonathan had the right to the throne by birth. David had a claim to the throne by virtue of the anointing of Samuel. These two should have been clashing with one another. Their attitude was, "We will stick together and not let the throne stand in our way." Jonathan relinquished his right to be king and submitted to David. As long as Jonathan lived, David had a friend. Proverbs says, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." David had such a friend.

C. David loved Saul.

Saul was constantly trying to kill David. David had some prime opportunities to kill Saul, but he would not touch the Lord's anointed. One time



Rex Yancey

David could have killed him in a cave. One time David was in the middle of his camp while he was asleep. His men begged to kill Saul. But David said, "Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?"

David commended the people of Jabesh Gilead for taking Saul's headless body down from the wall of Beth Shan. David respected his enemy's dignity.

David deeply regretted Saul's downfall. He referred to Saul in his eulogy as "the beauty of Israel, the mighty of the Lord of hosts." He downplayed the news of Saul's death and recounted Saul as a mighty warrior.

God help us if in failing to love God, we fail to love each other. No man can have a heart for God without having a heart for his brother.

D. David loved Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:6-13).

In 2 Samuel 9:3, "And the king said, 'Is there not yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?' And Ziba said to the king, 'There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet.'" Verse 7 says, "And David said to him, 'Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly.'"

We cannot have a heart for God without having a kind heart. Paul said in Ephesians 4:32, "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

Are there any Mephibosheth's out there to whom we can be kind? Some are physically lame. Some are spiritually and emotionally lame. If we have a heart for God, we will be kind.

III. David had a confessing heart (2 Samuel 12:1-7, 13).

Nathan confronted David. David admitted that he had sinned against God. Psalm 51 records the agony of a wayward heart repenting its way back to God.

When Alexander the Great was at the pinnacle of his power, he invited a famous artist to paint his portrait. The painting depicts Alexander with his head in his hands, as though he were thinking. However, historians tell us that Alexander had a horrible scar on one cheek, which he had received in battle. Since he was ashamed of the

scar, he had the artist paint him with his hands covering it.

Make no mistake about it, the Holy Spirit never once attempted to hide the scars of any Bible personality. This was not a public relations job on behalf of David. David could not hide his sin from God. David was a great sinner. But he was also a great repentant. One cannot have a heart for God without repenting of his sins before God.

IV. David had a contented heart (2 Samuel 7:1-17).

One of the most difficult experiences in life is to be denied the opportunity for doing what you want to do. David wanted to crown his reign by building a temple for the Lord.

Years later Solomon prayed, "Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. But the Lord said to David my father, whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart; nevertheless, you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build the house for my name."

Sometimes God says, "No." But his "No" is always for the best. David would get more joy out of knowing his son would build the temple. Plus, God was going to build a dynasty for David.

There were some things David needed to remember at this disappointing time in his life. "Now, therefore, thus shall you say to my servant David, 'Thus say the Lord of hosts, I took you from the sheep, that you should be leader over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a name like the name of the great ones who are in the earth.'" (1 Chronicles 17:7-8).

Brothers and sisters, we must not cry over the little things we did not get in life. Consider where you were when he found you and where you are now.

David accepted God's "No" and began collecting materials for Solomon to build his temple. No wonder the Bible records that David was a man from God's own heart.

One day when everything is shaken out of the sack, the only important thing will be whether or not we had a heart for God.

I read of a migratory bird that was caught and put in a cage when it was young. It belonged to a species of birds which migrated in the autumn from Europe to Africa. Although this particular bird never made that flight, when the season of migration came, it would sit upon its perch in its cage and beat its wings for hours and hours at a time as if in rapid flight. Down in the bird's heart somewhere was the dim vision of the land far away, the land of food, sunshine, and happiness.

Dear friends, some of us have been grounded and domesticated by a controversy that has confined us. But I must believe that down in our hearts somewhere our wings are beating for that great migration of the soul when we can drop that which divides us and fly away to God.

I want it. Do you want it? My wings are beating. Are yours? The thing that will get us through is the fact that we have a heart for God.

We could leave no better legacy for the next generation than to have a heart for God. We could have no better epitaph for our gravestone than that we had a heart for God.

My challenge to the 1990 Convention is simply this: Do you have a heart for God? Do you have a courageous, compassionate, confessing, and contented heart? God's question to Peter was not "Do you believe me?" although that is important. His question to Peter was, "Do you love me? Do you have a heart for me?" That's the only thing that's going to matter when we stand before God. That's the thing that matters as we stand before each other and the world now. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35. If we don't love each other, what does the world know about us?

Yancey is pastor, First Church, Quitman.



Jack Winscott, left, pastor of Prentiss Church and president of the Board of Ministerial Education, recognizes J. B. Costilow for 34 years of service as BSU director, Clarke College. Costilow also served as the board's representative at Clarke, and was recognized during the Wednesday morning session of the Convention. He retired last May as student director but is still on the Clarke staff.



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Thursday, November 22, 1990

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Letters to the editor

8-year-old goes to the convention

P. J. Scott, pastor of First Church, Olive Branch, introduced to me last week his friend, Daniel Cavanaugh, age 8. "Daniel," he said, "has been coming to the Mississippi Baptist Convention all his life!"

Sure enough — that was true. Born July 11, 1982, Daniel moved about five months later from Memphis to Arkabutla when his dad, Charles Cavanaugh, became pastor of the Arkabutla Baptist Church. For the following five Novembers he came to the convention and stayed with other kids in preschool care. Then at age 6 he began sitting in the sanctuary through every session. He's done that for three years.

"Don't you have to miss school?" I asked.

"Three days," he said.

"Why do you?"

His father answered that. Daniel goes to school at home, where his parents are his teachers. "We feel that the convention is an educational experience for him," said the elder Cavanaugh. "For instance, he learns about parliamentary procedure."

"Haven't you ever been sick during convention time?"

The perky, live-wire third grader said "no," thought a bit, and added, "Or if I was, I wasn't sick enough to stay at home."

When I asked him who was his favorite among the Thursday speakers, he said it was Dr. Frank Pollard — and I found out he'd really been listening because he repeated one of the funny stories Dr. Pollard had told.

"What do you like best about coming to the convention?"



Daniel demonstrates how he built a plaything in his backyard before his grandfather built a treehouse there.

"Eating," he quickly decided. In Jackson, his family — his dad, his mother, Pam, and his little brother, Micah, 2 — go to some of his favorite restaurants, like McDonald's, Shoney's, and Wendy's, he said. He likes "salads, pizza, steak . . ."

"What do you NOT like about the convention?"

"Sitting so long!"

Daniel, named for a Bible character, as also is his brother, decided at age 5 to accept Jesus as his

Savior; his dad baptized him. He is a member of Royal Ambassadors, and he likes to sing at church. He said he doesn't play the piano, but would like to take lessons.

"I have about a hundred books," he estimated. "I like to play ball, and I like to play in my treehouse."

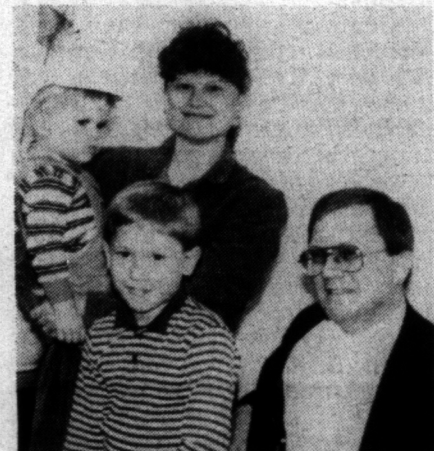
His Grandfather Cavanaugh of Henderson, Ky., built that tree house. Now Daniel says, "I might want to be a carpenter when I grow up."

"But I thought you said you wanted to be a businessman?"

"Well, I can be both! A carpenter needs to be a businessman!"

"Where did you meet your friend, P. J. Scott?"

"Oh, I've been seeing him around at conventions every year. Or maybe I met him at the associational meeting. I go to those, too."



Daniel attends conventions with his father, Charles Cavanaugh, pastor of Arkabutla Church; his mother, Pam; and his little brother, Micah.

Re: News from ABP

Editor:

After my review of this past issue of The Baptist Record, October 25, 1990, I have been moved to forward to you the following comments on the choice of topics that has been considered newsworthy; and the sources from which the information was gathered.

First, I oppose the continued coverage given to the splinter movement in our convention which is referred to as a "Fellowship" without name. I agree that the conflict or divisions which exist in our convention are indeed newsworthy. However, the recent coverage has gone so far as to week after week report on the discourse of this group, even to the extent of laying out in detail alternate giving schemes to the Cooperative Program. This, and other similar information, is merely a plan by 3,000 unelected, unappointed, conference attendees, representing only themselves, seeking to undermine a program of cooperation that the overwhelming majority of Mississippi Baptists support completely. Should not their plans and comments best be disseminated in their own news magazine, as opposed to the press that belongs to the mainstream of Baptist belief?

Next, I take exception to the fact that as many stories on national Baptist issues have been gathered from the Associated Baptist Press as the Baptist Press, the latter being the official news agency of our SBC. The ABP employs, and is influenced by, Mr. Martin and Mr. Shackelford, both of whom were dismissed from the BP. Further, you may be assured dismissal has not contributed to their ability to report Baptist news without

bias. This choice of using the ABP can only be to undermine the efforts of the BP, and our elected leadership.

It is my request that the Baptist Record report on issues which are uniquely newsworthy to the mainstream Mississippi Baptist. Although it is true that I have not asked every Baptist in Mississippi, every Baptist I have asked at my church and in my association has not shared the belief that the splinter group is deserving of the coverage given them in a newspaper owned by, and responsible to, the mainstream Mississippi Baptist. In fact, should the type of coverage we now receive continue, I can only believe that you have abandoned reporting and ventured into the task of persuading.

Paul David Walley
Attorney at Law
Richton

Vote against gambling

Editor:

Very soon — on Dec. 4 to be precise — an election of unprecedented importance will take place in Harrison, Hancock, and Jackson counties. At issue is whether or not gambling will become legal. I firmly believe that most of the residents of these three counties, Christians and non-Christians alike, believe that this would be a bad move. However, I am afraid that this election might be won by the pro-gambling forces by default.

The purpose of this letter is to appeal urgently to all Christians in the three coast counties to go to the polls in force on Dec. 4 and defeat this potential tragedy that our elected officials in Jackson have dumped in our laps.

Jack Melton
Gulfport

"God has, and forever will, preserve his Word"

By Anne W. McWilliams

"That They All May Be One . . ." was the theme of the 1990 Mississippi Baptist Convention. Each session dealt with "one-ness" — "One in the Spirit," "One in Fellowship," "One in Mission," "One in the Word," "One in Witness," and "One in Worship." In four sessions, Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, delivered an inspirational "Bible Treasure" message.

Tuesday morning, Pollard spoke on Hebrew 13:8.

"We live in a changing world," he said. . . . "Life's deepest need is for the unchanging, never-leaving friend. God's word to that need is: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever."

"The Lord of yesterday walks into our past and cleanses us from our sins. He pulls up the record and punches the 'delete' button . . ."

"In today's stress and trials, he is here. You face the strain of making your way, of bills and taxes, but he is here and you need him today."

"In our relationships, we say, 'Lord, I need you. I'm married to a woman. I need you. I'm married to a man. I need you. I have teenage children. I need you.' Teenagers may say: 'I have parents. I need you.' I've lost my family. I've lost my job. I have to move. I'm sick and I know it's serious. I need you. I'm frightened. I need you."

I don't know what we're going to do. I need you . . ."

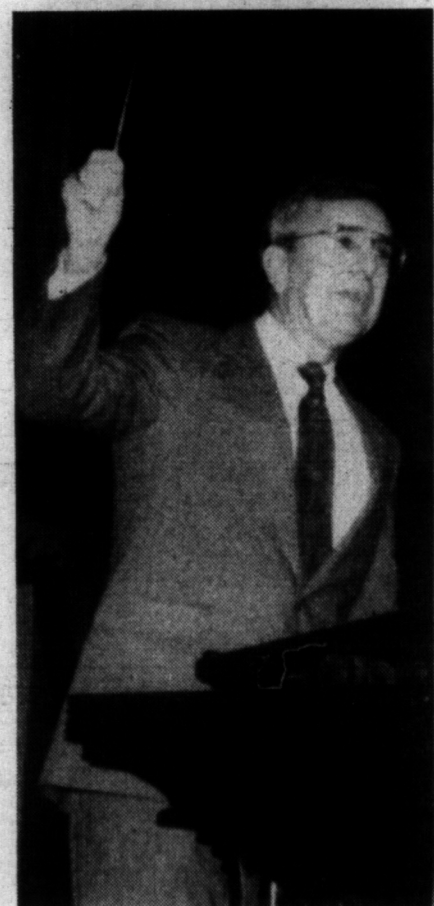
"You have Him. Hear him say: 'I am with you always.' He is the Lord of today."

"Are you worried about tomorrow? Worried that the world will be destroyed if someone intoxicated by vodka or bourbon or power becomes unstable and pushes the button to involve us in nuclear war? Are you worried about economic depression? . . ."

"Are you afraid to face eternity, the unknown on the other side of the grave? He is the Lord of tomorrow. Jesus Christ is at work in your yesterdays and your todays and your tomorrows. . . . As we make it our job to love him and share him and serve him, then we will find our strength and our being."

In the Tuesday afternoon session, Pollard read Ephesians 4:29-32, the concluding words of which are "Be ye kind, one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." His topic was "What We Need To Remember."

"How can you make a difference in the world?" he asked. As one who made a difference, he pointed to Barnabas. When Barnabas and Saul went off on their first missionary journey, Barnabas' name was mentioned first, in reference to them — "Barnabas



Frank Pollard

and Saul." Then suddenly this changed to "Saul (or Paul) and Barnabas." But Barnabas did not express jealousy. "He willingly stepped into a secondary position so Paul could fulfill God's destiny for his life . . . The spirit and ministry of Barnabas is still the most effective service in the Kingdom."

Wednesday morning's Bible Treasure centered on "the Word of God, which endures forever" (I Peter 1:21-25).

"God has, and forever will, preserve his Word," Pollard said. Though there have been "attempts to destroy it physically, to keep it from being understood, and to discredit it intellectually, . . . a divine power protects it and promotes it . . . Millions of copies have been put to flame, thrown to the fish, cut to pieces, and otherwise destroyed, but this Bible is indestructible."

"This is where we go to get God's truth," he said. "You have to trust the source from which you get the truth. You can trust God's Word. You can bank on it."

"Why has this Word survived? Because God wants us to hear the gospel . . . God . . . wanted us to know him so he gave us himself in Jesus Christ . . . In the Bible we meet Christ and therefore we meet

God . . . Through Christ, God is saying, 'I love you.'

"Use your Bible. Do what it tells you to do."

"The Word of God will endure forever, and so will you if you know him, the Living Word, Jesus Christ."

Wednesday afternoon's message, "One in Witness," was based on Romans 1:14-16 — "I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."

"What are they hearing us say?" Pollard asked. "If they are not hearing us say, 'You are dead in trespasses and sins,' then they are not hearing what we need to be saying . . ."

"What is meant by the call? The gospel is the power of God unto salvation . . ."

"Who am I, and what am I about? I am debtor. We owe the gospel to the world because we know it — and therefore, we owe it. When we realize that, then we are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are ready to go anywhere, do anything our Lord would have us do. We are ready to preach the gospel."



Mrs. Roy Harris and daughters, Helen, Ann, and Laura, of Yazoo City, and friend, Brandi Brewer, enjoy the bridge at the Mother-Daughter Weekend at Camp Garaywa.

Missions weekend involves 2,400

The Mississippi Royal Ambassadors and Girls Auxiliary involved over 2,400 youth in a weekend of mission education. The Brotherhood Department, Paul Harrell, director, brought 2,200 boys to the campus at Mississippi College for a fun weekend of food, fellowship, and football.

Mike Harland, minister of music at Crossgates Church, Brandon, led them in choruses. John Williams,

coach of the Mississippi College Division II Champion Choctaws, introduced his team. Several of the players gave personal testimonies. Steve Smith, missionary to Argentina, thrilled the lads with the mission story in a foreign land.

Then it was a basketball game and finally the football game between the MC Choctaws and Delta State. This was probably the largest crowd,

10,200, ever to witness a game in Clinton.

Meanwhile under the moss-drenched oaks at Camp Garaywa, Marjean Patterson, Patricia Simmons, and Fran Pickett led the GA Mother-Daughter overnight mission activities. There were 204 present for a weekend of arts, crafts, games, and mission study.

John and Claudia Brown, missionaries to Mozambique, shared the story of mission work in Africa.

Wanda Henderson, missionary to Korea, presented the challenge of missions from a land very receptive to the gospel.

This was one of four Mother-Daughter weekends to be at Garaywa this year. Overall a host of Mississippi youth heard the exciting story of home and foreign missions in an ideal setting.



First Church, Collins, was well represented by Jim Goff, RA leader, and the RA boys.



Chief Choc

Steve Smith, sports evangelist, spoke to the RAs at MC about the relationship between athletics and Christian life. There is the "principle of participation," he said. "We don't realize the necessity of playing the game." He indicated that there is a danger of making "Christianity a spectator's sport." Smith said there is also the "principle of practice," and the "principle of persistence." Smith quoted the Apostle Paul, who said "Let us run with endurance."

ADOPTS

From page 3

Hensley, who jokingly said that 10 years was "long enough for anybody to be sentenced to this chair." And messengers elected Levon Moore, retired director of missions for Attala Association, as associate recording secretary.

The resolution on encouraging dialogue at the SBC, called on the Committee on Order of Business to consider optional workshops during the SBC "to discuss the issues and challenges facing the convention and to explore means to carry out the Great Commission."

The Baptist Faith and Message statement, subject of another resolution, was adopted by the SBC in 1963, and quotes passages from the Bible to explain commonly held beliefs of Baptists.

The 1987 Peace Committee report to the SBC included more specific interpretations related to the Bible, which have been incorporated as belief requirements of at least one SBC agency.

For instance, to be hired or promoted at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., a faculty member must cite belief in a direct creation of mankind, therefore, Adam and Eve were real people as depicted in the biblical book of Genesis, that miracles in the Bible were actually supernatural occurrences, that the books of the Bible were written by the authors to which they are ascribed, and that the historical narratives given by biblical authors are accurate and reliable.

In other business, the constitution and bylaws committee entered for next year's consideration a constitutional change which would place the convention board's executive director-treasurer as an ex officio member of all Mississippi Baptist boards and agencies, in addition to the MBCB and Executive Committee. Currently, only the convention president is an ex officio member of all convention boards, commissions, and committees.

Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles requested a tabling until any legal ramifications could be considered. That request was voted down, 277 to 352. Committee Chairman Anthony Kay of Calhoun City declined to say who had suggested such a constitutional change, but that it was not Bill Causey.

Resolutions were also passed supporting American armed forces overseas and opposing abortion except to save the life of the mother.

The resolution on abortion called upon "the Attorney General of Mississippi to take the legal action necessary to enforce the existing Mississippi statute that prohibits providing abortions to minors without parental consent."

And the resolution encouraged churches to set aside the third Sunday of January as "Sanctity of Human Life Sunday" as an occasion for pastors and other leaders to speak out on the sins of sexual promiscuity, abortion on demand, infanticide, and euthanasia. The resolution also suggested Mississippi Baptists inquire whether their own physicians perform abortions on demand.

A resolution was passed noting

Mississippi College's national football championship in the NCAA Division II. It also noted Coach John Williams' was named coach of the year, and that the cheerleaders have won three recent national cheerleader championships.

Three resolutions honored retiring convention and convention board personnel: J. Clark Hensley, Don McGregor, and Chester Vaughn.

Hensley, who retired as executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, is retiring again as family ministry consultant for the MBCB. He also completed 10 sessions as recording secretary of the MBCB. The resolution noted that he had been a personal advisor and counselor to many Mississippi Baptists. He was commended "for his untiring efforts, caring concern, and exemplary Christian spirit." And the resolution noted Hensley's being "recognized throughout the state and the Southern Baptist Convention for his contributions to quality of life for many and the strengthening of churches in their ministries with persons."

Don McGregor, retiring as editor of the Baptist Record, was also honored by a resolution which noted that he had "faithfully served the Mississippi Baptist Convention through his commitment to journalistic integrity and editorial responsibility during his service to the Convention." The resolution noted his chairing of the Baptist Press Liaison Committee, chairing the Southern Baptist Public Relations Advisory Committee, and presidency of the Southern Baptist Press Association, and said that he "established a high standard of journalistic professionalism through the various positions he has held in secular as well as denominational newspapers."

And Chester Vaughn, also retiring at the end of the year as program director for the MBCB, was honored with a resolution that noted his having been elected president of the Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association, and the Southeastern, Southwestern, and Southern Baptist Religious Education Associations. The resolution also commended Vaughn for having "initiated church and associational programs which have enhanced and strengthened the work of God's people through Mississippi and throughout the Southern Baptist Convention." And the resolution noted Vaughn's "commitment to church growth, organizational expansion, and evangelistic zeal."

Messengers voted that a page in the 1990 convention annual be given in honor of Chester Swor, for a photograph and biographical material concerning the Baptist layman, author, and lecturer to college students who died this year.

President Hamilton named Kerry Grantham of Jackson as chairman of the next year's Committee on Committees. Other members he named are Dell Scoper, Laurel; Ed Brashier, Louisville; P.J. Scott, Olive Branch; and James Spencer, Picayune.

The 1991 Mississippi Baptist Convention will take place Nov. 13-14 at First Church, Jackson, with Gary Berry, pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg, preaching the annual sermon. Jimmy McGee of Grenada was named alternate preacher.

Just for the Record

The Mississippi College department of music will present the annual Festival of Lights, Dec. 6-7, 8:15 p.m. in Provine Chapel on the campus. The program will consist of arrangements of traditional carols, audience carol singing; and the featured work will be Francis Poulenc's Christmas Motets performed by the Mississippi College Concert Singers.

Admission is free.

Just for the Record

Thursday, November 22, 1990

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Coronation services were held recently at Lake Harbor Church, Rankin Association, for its Mission Friends and GAs. The girls shared scripture they had learned, presented a puppet show, and served refreshments. Pictured, are Deanna Tagert, Rachel Eure, Mandy Dotson, and Melanie Clark. Mrs. Joy Rachel is the director. Roy Clark is pastor.



Acteers of Grace Church, Vicksburg, participated in a coronation service, Sept. 30. The title was "Missions Through God's Children: One Day at a Time." Pictured, from left, are Jaudon McKay, director; Wendy Myers; Cindy Myers; Kari Luther, Denise Crow; Cathy Wright, and Sarah Wright, director.



Midway Church, Meridian, held a GA Recognition Service with the theme "So Send I You." Pictured, front row, left to right, are Paige Ethridge, Katie Peterson, Courtney Darnell, Rachel Moore, Rebecca Fields, Melissa Estes. Back row, left to right, Deda Moore, leader, Christy McWhorter, Danielle Miles, Jaycee Flanagan, Christie Rigdon, and Anna Eaves, leader/director.



Mississippi Baptist Medical Center's BSU is sponsoring an arts and crafts show to raise money for missions, Nov. 29, 11:30-12:30, in the Subway Auditorium. Representatives from two schools, radiography and medical technology, are pictured with various items that will be featured at the show. From left are Cathie Decantillon (standing), and Will Hannah, medical technology students; Paul Webb, Miranda Smith, and Denise Bennett, radiography students.

Macedonia Church, Brookhaven, promoted Sunday School emphasis in October with a "Friend Day" goal of 500 in Sunday School. On Oct. 28, there were 577 in Sunday School, over 600 in worship services, and 202 visitors with over 50 prospects. Robert H. Perry is pastor.

A harvest night revival will be held at Crossgates Church, Brandon, Monday, Nov. 26, at 7 p.m. Evangelist David Ring, son of a Baptist minister and a victim of cerebral palsy, is the guest speaker. Tommy Vinson is pastor.

Clarke College students held a fall festival recently on campus. This was a mission effort sponsored by the Baptist Student Union. The festival netted \$75 for missions.



A church building aid check from the state mission offering for \$2,000 was presented to Doug Farris (left), pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Corinth, by Ralph Culp, Alcorn Association board member and pastor of East Corinth Church. L. Edward Gandy is director of missions of Alcorn Association.

Houston Road Church, Laurel (Jones) held a first through third grade GA recognition service Oct. 7. Girls recognized with GA buttons and badges for their completed mission adventures pictured, left to right, are Jessica Brouard, Katie Taylor, Suzanne Ishee, Anna Welborn, Jennifer Copeland, Amy Holifield, Amber Hudson, and Shannon Higginbotham. Lana Taylor is GA leader.

Improve Church will present a program of living pictures entitled "Scenes of Christ", on Dec. 8 and Dec. 9, from 6 until 8 p.m. This will be a walking tour on the church grounds. Provisions have been made for those unable to walk. A biblical account of each scene will be given at each stop. Tours will last about 20 minutes.

There will be 11 scenes depicting events in the life of Christ, from his birth to his ascension.

About 120 people will be involved in the production of this program. This will be the fourth consecutive year for it to be presented.

Improve Church is on Highway 44, eight miles east of Columbia.

Peter and the Wolf at Puppet Wonderland

Mississippi Puppetry Guild and Jackson Coca-Cola present the Puppet Arts Theatre in Sergei Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf at the Belhaven College Campus, Jackson. The performances are scheduled for Wednesday through Friday, Dec. 12-14, 9 and 10:30 a.m.

Single tickets are \$2.50, groups of 10 to 99 — \$2 per person, and special discounts for groups of over 100. All adults free with a group of 25 children or more. For more information and ticket reservations call 977-9840, or write to Mississippi Puppetry Guild, Inc., P. O. Box 12123, Jackson, MS 39236.

CONVENTIONS From page 5

North Carolina

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP) — Messengers to the 1990 convention approved a motion by C. Mark Corts, pastor of Winston-Salem's Calvary church, by a margin of 122 votes out of 6,004 cast which changed the form but not the figures or items included in the proposed budget for 1991.

Gene L. Watterson, pastor of First Church of Shelby, will serve a second year as president.

The general board of the Baptist state convention recommended a budget which would have maintained the same division between the state and the national conventions — 64.83 per cent for North Carolina Baptist causes and 35.17 per cent for the Southern Baptist Convention.

It would have made as the norm for the Cooperative Program, a division of the amount going outside the state of 20.3 per cent undesignated to the SBC offices in Nashville and 14.87 per cent designated to Baptist causes named in the budget.

The proposed budget provided for churches to choose as an option that all of the 35.17 per cent going outside the state would be sent undesignated to the Southern Baptist Convention for distribution according to the budget approved by it.

The Corts motion reversed that formula. If churches make no choices on the use of their gifts through the Cooperative Program beyond the state, all of the funds will be sent undesignated to the SBC.

Churches may choose to have their funds divided between undesignated and designated causes at the national and international levels.

The budget later was approved for \$28.5 million, which has a preferred item of \$1.6 million for the Ministers Expanded Annuity. The subtotal of \$26,900,000 will be divided 64.83 per cent for the Baptist State Convention and 35.17 per cent for SBC causes.

New England

CAPE COD, Mass. (BP) — New England Southern Baptists met at Chatham Baptist Church on Cape Cod, Mass., for their eighth annual meeting Nov. 8-9.

All 1990 officers were re-elected. Ron Huffman, pastor of New Colony Church, Billerica, Mass., is president.

Messengers adopted a \$2,104,626 budget, up \$31,449 from the 1990 budget. An amendment to designate funds to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs was defeated.

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Names in the news



CLINTONIAN HONORED — Bill Causey, right, of Clinton, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, was honored by Mississippi College recently with the "Order of the Golden Arrow" Award. Lewis Nobles, left, president of the college, and Mrs. Causey, were on hand for the presentation. Causey is a 1952 graduate of MC and was honored for his contributions to denominational and community causes.



New faculty and staff of Clarke College were honored with a reception on Oct. 1, in the campus cafeteria. New faculty and staff members honored are, left to right: Bryan Burt, director of student services and baseball coach; Gail Hollingsworth, financial aid clerk; Lawrence White, BSU director; Frankie Harrison, college nurse; Wayne Miley, director of admissions; Steve Curtis, women's basketball coach; Joyce Zeigler, librarian; and Lynn Savell, instructor of English.



Dwayne Morgan was recently ordained to the gospel ministry by Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association. He has been called to Zion Church in Fulton as pastor. Bill Dowdy, pastor, Concord Church, is shown presenting the certificate of ordination to Morgan.

Jackie Green and Ronnie Scott were recently ordained as deacons by Concord Church.

Seven alumni were presented service certificates during homecoming festivities on Oct. 27 at William Carey College. Recognized for exceptional service to William Carey College were Margaret Lou (Hemeter) Gillespie, Mississippi Woman's College class of 1931; Nancy Kent, class of 1965; Beverly (Rush) Thames, class of 1970; Jim Smith, class of 1981; Ted Cannon, class of 1976; Annette Drennan, class of 1981; and Beth Riley, class of 1986.



William R. Patten, pastor, and his family were honored by Highland Church, Vicksburg, Oct. 6, with a reception on the occasion of his fifth anniversary. Pictured with Patten is his wife, Margaret, and children, Rachel and Robert.

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP) — Clayton K. Harrop, professor of New Testament interpretation at Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., has been named as the seminary's acting dean of academic affairs.

In announcing the appointment, seminary president William O. Crews said Harrop will begin to work immediately with Robert L. Cate, who has resigned effective Jan. 31, 1991, to become the Young professor of religion at Oklahoma State University.

Tate is MWC alumni of the year

William Carey College announces its recognition of Rachel Lowry Tate as Outstanding Alumni of Mississippi Woman's College, 1990.

Tate, WCC (MWC) class of 1931, dedicated herself to missions, both home and foreign, during her years at Woman's College. She later worked on the faculty at the Mississippi School for the Deaf, and taught Sunday School there for 25 years before helping to establish a ministry for the deaf at Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, in 1961. That ministry has grown to serve 50 members, has its own Hands of Praise Choir, its own chapel, and its own minister.

William Carey College is proud to uplift her as a role model and recognize her as Outstanding Alumna of Mississippi Woman's College.

Carey establishes Ratliff scholarship

The L. Craig Ratliff Endowed Scholarship at William Carey College has been established by friends of Craig Ratliff, late community leader, scholar, and minister of University Church, Hattiesburg. The scholarship recipients must be undergraduate students demonstrating financial need as evidenced on the Financial Aid Form, have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, and will be selected by the scholarship committee of William Carey College. Monies donated to the endowment will be deposited by William Carey College with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation.

Ratliff served as pastor of University Church from 1969 to 1980. He had previously pastored First Church, Newport, Tenn., and Union Hall in Goodlettsville, Tenn. A native of Amarillo, Texas, Ratliff graduated from Amarillo High School, Baylor University, and Southern Seminary. He wrote numerous publications for the Sunday School Board. He authored a large number of articles for numerous Baptist periodicals, and wrote the book, *Because We Believe*.

Persons wishing to do so may contribute to the L. Craig Ratliff Scholarship Fund by sending contributions to the office of the Financial Vice President, William Carey College, Tuscan Avenue, Hattiesburg, Miss., marked L. Craig Ratliff Scholarship Fund.

Benton-Tippah becomes reality

In the 1989 annual meetings of the Benton Association and the Tippah Association, the two voted to merge into one association, the Benton-Tippah Association.

This merger has taken place in phases over the past year, and the process became a reality on Oct. 23, 1990 at Ashland Church, Ashland.

Bill McCreary, associational director, said he felt this merger would be a "positive step forward for the work of our Lord in this area of our state."

WMU announces poster contest for GAs

The executive board of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union has announced a poster contest for WMU Special Day, 1991. All GAs in Mississippi are eligible to enter. Deadline for entries is Dec. 15, 1990.

For more information and rules of the contest, contact the WMU Department, Box 530, Jackson, 39205, phone (601) 968-3800.

Homecomings

New Zion Church, Walnut Grove (Leake): Dec. 2; 10 a.m., former pastors speaking; noon, lunch in fellowship hall; 1 p.m., singing by The Burns Family.

Mississippi Baptist activities

Nov. 26
Nov. 30-
Dec. 1

"M" Night (in each association) (DT emphasis)
Area Coordinators Specialized Training; Central Hills Retreat;
Noon, 30th-3:30 p.m., 1st (BRO)

Growth spiral is working

By Randy Tompkins

A report from the Baptist Sunday School Board, SBC, cites a group of Mississippi Baptist churches for the growth they have experienced through a goal-setting project.

The 1989-90 report from the Board's Growth Section notes five Mississippi churches on the Super Spiral report.

The Super Spiral is an aggressive version of the Growth Spiral. Both utilize goal-setting and evaluating progress toward reaching those goals.

The five churches are: First, Greenville; Freney, Carthage; First, Picayune; Carriage Hills, Southaven; and Harmony, Pontotoc. These churches have averaged participating in the Super Spiral just over 13 months.

During this time there has been a total of 514 new enrollees for an average of 103 new enrollees per church. There has also been an increase of 547 prospects placed on the prospect file for an average of 109 per church.

There have been 86 new workers enlisted and 44 others participating in an outreach on a weekly basis.

The Sunday School attendance has risen an average of 55 per week per participating church. The worship service attendance has increased an average of 47 per participating church.

These statistics show that when a church follows the principles of

growth outlined through the Growth Spiral they reach more people for Bible study and salvation experiences.

The next statewide Growth Spiral Training Clinic will be held Feb. 26, at Broadmoor Church, Jackson. The Growth Spiral Conference will have a session for church leadership that has never participated in a Growth Spiral Conference.

This session will be entitled, "Basic Growth Spiral" and will be led by Ken Marler, former Mississippi pastor. Another session entitled, "Advanced Growth Spiral" will be led by Andy Anderson.

Other churches listed on the basic Spiral program with the Sunday School Board are: Calvary, Belmont; Antioch, Columbus; Community, Columbus; Calvary, Greenville; Second, Greenville; Emmanuel, Greenwood; Belaire, Gulfport; FBC, Hattiesburg; Thirty-Eighth Avenue, Hattiesburg; Oak Forest, Jackson; Parkway, Jackson; Southside, Jackson; Unity, Leakesville; Commission Road, Long Beach; First, Maben; Bethel, Monticello; Fredonia, New Albany; Four Mile Creek, Pascagoula; Harmony, Pontotoc; Highland, Senatobia; FBC, State Line; Oloh, Sumrall; FBC, Tupelo; West Jackson Street, Tupelo; Tylertown, Tylertown; FBC, Winona.

Tompkins is growth consultant, Sunday School Department, MBCB.



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Believing in the Son unto salvation

By Jim Smith
John 3:22-36

We are in the midst of an information explosion. The volume of knowledge is increasing at such a rate that it is doubling about every 20 years. We know many facts but to "know Jesus" we must move beyond historical facts to "knowing" him through a personal experience of faith.



Smith

Our scripture passage opens today with Jesus and his disciples going into Judaea where they made disciples and began to baptize them. Prior to this time, John had a number of disciples who followed him, supported him, and espoused his doctrine of repentance and baptism. You will remember that Paul encountered a group of John the Baptist's disciples in Ephesus (Acts 19:3). As more people came to Jesus, John's disciples became jealous for the ministry of their mentor and for themselves. They had knowledge of Jesus, including John's testimony; but they did not

UNIFORM

"know" him as the Savior of the world.

John takes the opportunity to once again glorify God and give testimony to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He acknowledges that Jesus' ministry was growing because it was God's plan and purpose for Jesus' to increase while his decreased. He expresses his joy at the popularity of Jesus, just as a best man rejoices at the bridegroom's joy at his own wedding.

John never sought to deny or usurp the authority of Jesus. He did the job God ordained that he do and he was ready to continue to fill his place in the plan of God even if it meant obscurity or even death. John's great joy was to do the will of God as best he could.

John's major task had been fulfilled. His ministry would begin to decrease. Soon he would be arrested and eventually beheaded for preaching as God commanded.

From the language of verses 31-35 we would probably be correct to assume that these are the words of John the apostle and not John the

Baptist. The writer acknowledges that since Jesus was the Son of God and had been in heaven with him, he knew the Father and the things of heaven. Jesus indicates elsewhere that he was come down from heaven to do the will of the Father. So only Jesus could give testimony of the Father. Coming from heaven, Jesus is above all other persons, creatures and things. He is above all creation in his knowledge, his power, and his purpose.

Although Jesus gave a true testimony of all he had seen, heard and received of the Father, he was rejected (for the most part) by the very people he came to save, the Jews. It is unfortunate that he is still completely rejected by so many today. Still others believe only superficially and when the cares of the world come upon them they pray for relief and, on not receiving it instantly, they curse God and turn back unto the world. A saving faith goes beyond believing to a lifelong commitment to Jesus.

Those who received the testimony, the witness of Jesus Christ, attest that the words he spoke of God are true. By personal experience they "know" that Jesus is the Son of God. By personal experience they "know" the

power and presence of the Holy Spirit. By personal experience they also testify to the grace of God.

Because God has given Jesus the words of life, Jesus said he did not testify of himself but of God the Father who sent him. Words of life, given by God the Father for the salvation of all mankind who will receive the witness. The power of Jesus was not partial but the Father gave everything unto his hands. He is the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes to the Father but through him. The Holy Spirit dwelt with Jesus in a fullness not experienced by men before. Previously, the Spirit had come upon a man for a certain period of time and had empowered him to do a specific task; but now the Holy Spirit did not depart from Jesus.

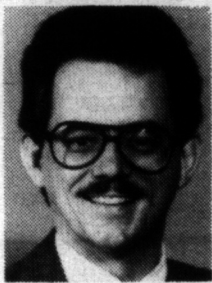
We conclude with another great scripture passage akin to John 3:17. Those that believe on the Son (unto salvation) have eternal life, but those who do not believe (commit to the Son) will not see life eternal with Jesus in heaven but will endure the wrath of an angry God forever. Whom will you believe today? The choice is yours.

Smith is pastor, Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian.

Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!

By Bob Rogers
Ezekiel 34:1-16

The Camden, Maine, Herald ran two photos on the same page: one of Camden's board of selectmen and town manager, the other of a flock of sheep. Unintentionally the captions were reversed. Under the picture of the sheep the caption named them, left to right, as town officers. The caption under the photo of the town fathers grouped around a table read, "The Sheep Fold — naive and vulnerable, they huddle for security against the uncertainties of the outside world." This Sunday's lesson, Ezekiel 34:1-16, is about the need people have for caring leaders, as sheep who need a kind shepherd.



Rogers

1) The selfish shepherds (vss. 1-4, 7-10)

The Lord told Ezekiel to prophesy, "Woe be

LIFE AND WORK

to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!" (vs. 2). Who were these selfish shepherds? Ezekiel was most likely speaking to the kings and other political leaders, who had failed to lead Israel in following the Lord. In I Kings 22:17, the loss of the king of Israel was pictured as leaving the people scattered like sheep without a shepherd. King David had become a standard of right leadership, and the Hebrew historians regularly recorded how each king compared with David (2 Kings 14:3; 18:3; 22:2). Ezekiel contrasted the evil shepherds in this passage with David (vs. 23).

These ruthless rulers fed themselves, but not the people. "Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool . . . but ye feed not the flock" (vs. 3). The fat was considered the best part of the meat, so they were keeping the best for themselves, and giving the people the leftovers. Verse 4 lists those who were neglected: the

diseased, the sick, the broken, those driven away, and the lost. Because they failed as leaders, they would no longer lead Israel (vss. 7-10). The Jewish kings assumed their dynasty would go on forever, but with the Babylonian captivity, it came to an end.

This is a reminder to Christian leaders that we have an extra responsibility. First Peter 5:1-4 compares Christian leaders with good shepherds who must beware that they care for their flocks with the right motives.

2) The scattered sheep (vss. 5-6)

Verses 5-6 depict the people of Israel as like sheep scattered, wandering aimlessly through the mountains. We are reminded here of our Lord Jesus' compassion for the people, who "were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). What a picture of our world today, lost and hopeless. All around us are scattered sheep, who are preyed upon by the selfish shepherds of New Age philosophy and feel-good cults, and malnourished by drugs and vain ambition. Who will lead them?

3) The seeking shepherd (vss. 11-16)

"For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out" (vs. 11). God in his grace takes the initiative and seeks us out. Verse 16 tells how God seeks the lost, those driven away, the broken, and the sick, in direct contrast to the neglect of these same ones by the selfish shepherds in verse 4. All of this points to the Messiah, Jesus, who said in John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." It was this Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ who sought us while we were yet sinners, and died for us (Romans 5:8). He is the seeking shepherd.

Questions to consider:

1. In what ways is Christ the Good Shepherd? What makes following him better than any other life-style?

2. According to I Peter 5:2-3, what are three ways that Christian leaders can become poor shepherds?

Rogers is pastor, Calvary Church, Gloucester.

Jesus' supernatural power to meet needs

By Lannie Wilbourn
Luke 8:26-39

"Life is hard" is the opening sentence of The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck. The disciples must have shared this feeling after



Wilbourn

coming off the lake where the wind howled to land in the region of Gerasa where a man was howling! They witnessed Jesus' supernatural power over the forces of nature, then his supernatural power over the demonic forces of the supernatural.

The demon-possessed man charged wildly down the hill to the water's edge when he saw the boat land. This behavior was an embarrassment to the residents of the region. They had bound him unsuccessfully with chains to prevent him from scaring visitors, women, and children. This wild man had apparently once been a normal person with a house and proper clothes. Now he lived in the lonely places where he could get shelter in vacant tombs. Naked, thrashing, and screaming he approached Jesus and the disciples. The twelve were still awestruck from the events of the night on the lake. Maybe they wanted to lie peacefully on the warm sand to rest and relieve the tension from the storm. Their question "Who is this man?" (vs. 25) still haunted them. This demon-possessed man fell on the sand at Jesus' feet and called him "Son of the Most High God." Gabriel told Mary that her son would be called this, (1:32). Abram gave a tithe

BIBLE BOOK

to Melchizedek, king of Salem, who "was priest of God Most High" (Gen. 14:18). Now the disciples heard this title applied to Jesus as they landed in Gentile territory! It gave explanation to the power they had witnessed. The demon-possessed man fell at Jesus' feet in fear not reverence.

Jesus' conversation with the demons is instructive. Notice that Jesus gave a command to come out of the man then permission for the destination of the demons. This single man faced a "legion" of demons. A Roman legion was 6,000 footsoldiers and some cavalry. It stretches our imagination to consider that many demons. The point is that Satan's army of occupation and destruction could not withstand the command of Jesus. They "begged him repeatedly" not to be tortured with sentencing to the "abyss" (vs. 31). This is the place of imprisonment of Satan and his demons. The word means "bottomless" and indicates a pit. It is torture to go there. There is an innate fear of falling in every person. To fall into a bottomless place is the greatest intensification of that fear possible. Even the demons didn't want to return home to their father! Entering pigs was preferred. The herd of pigs bolted off the cliffs into the lake that had a bottom. The demons obeyed Jesus' command and his permission.

The response of the residents of the region is pitiful to consider. They saw the formerly demon-possessed man sitting quietly at Jesus'

feet and were afraid of anyone who possessed the power for such healing. They had the opportunity of a lifetime to hear and heed the teaching of Jesus. They asked him to leave and he did. Fear prompted the request. Leon Morris comments on this action, "Their fear may have been a superstitious reaction to the supernatural power that had so evidently been in operation. It may also have been associated with the material loss involved in the destruction of the pigs. If so, they saw Jesus as a disturbing person, more interested in saving men than in material prosperity. It was more comfortable to ask Him to go." But Jesus did not leave the region without a witness. He told the

man freed from demons to "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." It is unthinkable that as disciples we would ever ask Jesus to leave us alone and let us become comfortable. Isn't it? Howling storms and howling men still strike fear into the hearts of believers and unbelievers. How we respond is real indication of our faith in God. Fear is uncomfortable in every age. Material prosperity is always appealing. We must be more concerned about the liberating of men enslaved to sin than our fears of their master. Our master is more powerful than any other.

Wilbourn is pastor, Pinelake Church, Brandon.

OTHER CONVENTIONS

Texas

HOUSTON (BP) — A record 7,450 messengers to the Baptist General Convention of Texas re-elected officers, considered motions related to the election of Baylor University trustees and escrowing of funds to the school, and adopted a \$63.5 million basic Cooperative Program unified budget during the 105th annual Texas state convention, Nov. 13-14 in Houston.

Messengers re-elected by acclamation: president, Phil Lineberger, pastor of Richardson Heights Church, Richardson; first vice president, Ed Rogers, pastor of First Church, Dumas; and second vice president, Billy Ray Parmer, pastor of First Church, Valley Mills.

Messengers also approved 2,432 to 1,487 a motion by David Becker of University Heights Baptist Church in Huntsville, encouraging the BGCT administrative committee and executive board to "explore ways to provide financial support" for the Associated Baptist Press alternative news service.

Baptists targeting needs among Romania's neglected

By Art Toalston

BRAILA, Romania (BP) — Baptists are not shying away from the human misery that continues in Romania.

Romanian Baptist pastor Iosif Stefanut and Southern Baptist representative Paul Thibodeaux recently negotiated a muddy road through the cow pasture and pig pens of a rural farm in eastern Romania. Beyond the farm, they came to a hospital — or so it was called.

The institution housed 60 men and 52 women, ranging in age from 15 to 78. All were said to be mentally handicapped. Only two days earlier, the pastor had learned of the remote facility and gained access to it.

An official guided Stefanut and Thibodeaux through dimly lit hallways, using a flashlight to let them look into the rooms. "The people were huddled either on beds or on the floor," Thibodeaux said. The facility, operated by the Romanian government, was filled with "the most deplorable conditions one could ever see," he said.

Thibodeaux quoted the pastor as saying, "We as a people, as a church, are responsible for caring for others. We're going to come here and clean this up and fix the electricity and plumbing. This is our duty."

Thibodeaux, of Oxford, Miss., told the pastor of Southern Baptists' willingness to help. The two agreed to request funds from Southern Baptist relief donations to purchase a sorely needed commercial washing machine for the institution and disinfectants and shampoo to kill lice.

Baptists in Romania and elsewhere have joined hands in numerous efforts to help Romanians of all ages who suffered the harshest forms of neglect under communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Ceausescu's 24-year regime ended with his ouster and execution last December.

Additionally, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is working out details for a missionary couple to assist Romania's 1,100-plus churches and is seeking six volunteers to teach English in the country. The board also has provided funds for 20,000 Romanian Bibles and 50,000 New Testaments in conjunction with the Baptist World Alliance and the European Baptist Federation.

The world was shocked by news

reports last spring of thousands of neglected Romanian orphans, many infected with AIDS from transfusions in which contaminated blood and needles were used. Even more shocking were recent reports of run-down institutions for mentally and physically handicapped children and adults, such as the one Thibodeaux visited. Stefanut, the Romanian pastor, had heard of another institution for handicapped children and youth, ages 3 to 14, but had not yet found it.

ABC's "20/20" program, in its Oct. 5 telecast, estimated more than 50 institutions for children and youth are hidden in remote areas throughout Romania. The total patient population may number from 8,000 to as many as 40,000, including hundreds who were perfectly normal as children but somehow were institutionalized as "deficient and unsalvageable," the program said.

Stefanut's congregation, Braila Baptist Church in the eastern city of Braila, is among the first in the country to begin ministering in such institutions. Meanwhile, Second Baptist Church in the western city of Oradea is the first Baptist congregation to obtain permission to open an orphanage.

One of the earliest efforts to meet human need in the name of Christ after Ceausescu's fall from power involved a \$1 million allocation from Southern Baptists' relief offerings. The funds purchased seed and related supplies for needy farmers in the Bacau region in easternmost Romania.

Two agricultural officials from the region wrote a letter of appreciation to Thibodeaux, who coordinated the project last spring. At first "we were not able to believe in your good intentions, owing first of all to the terror... we were subject to for many years," the officials said. But when the aid arrived "so promptly," it caused them to "really believe" in Southern Baptists' humanitarian concern.

Much of Southern Baptists' relief work is in eastern Romania. "It is by far the most economically depressed area of the country," Thibodeaux said. "It is also one of the areas where the fewest evangelical churches are located" and is more steeped in Romanian Orthodox traditions.

It also is a region that has received much less aid from the West,

Thibodeaux said. It is situated on the eastern side of the Carpathian Mountains and roads leading there are in poor condition.

Western Romania, meanwhile, is somewhat akin to the U.S. Bible Belt, Thibodeaux said. Most of Romania's Baptist churches and numerous other evangelical congregations meet in villages there. "After the revolution, a lot of aid came into Romania," Thibodeaux said, "but folks quite often went to the easier places to reach in western Romania, where they had more church contacts and more people speak English."

Animal husbandry specialists Charlie and Anne Pearson, Southern Baptist volunteers from Frisco, Texas, are studying needs related to farm animals in the Bacau region.

High-protein cattle food already has emerged as a critical need, Thibodeaux said. Dairy cattle in the Bacau region, he said, are so malnourished that they produce only one or two liters of milk a day, compared to 28 liters in Germany and 24 in Austria. Current drought conditions in the region threaten to cut dairy cattle output even further.

Short-term medical work and exploration of ministry opportunities in the Bacau region are being done by Bill Wilkerson, a Southern Baptist physician from Henderson, Texas, and his wife, Melba, a nurse, as well as two other Southern Baptist nurses, Teresa Smith of Mud Creek, Ala., and Janna Williams of Chicago. The latter two transferred to Romania from Yemen, where they had been working at a Baptist hospital until the Middle East crisis erupted.

Smith and Williams already have reported the need for a volunteer kidney specialist to spend up to a month in Romania helping medical personnel make better use of dialysis equipment at a hospital in Bacau and perhaps elsewhere in the country.

Foreign Mission Board human needs ministries in Romania have stirred interest not only among Southern Baptists but other Christians as well. Several Presbyterian churches in the Birmingham, Ala., area have inquired about channeling funds through the board to minister to Romanian children.

Toalston writes for FMB.

Devotional

"Night"

By Horace Kerr

During the dark days of World War II a traveler stood before a tombstone in an English cemetery. He carefully scraped the moss from the inscription and read, "There is not enough darkness in the whole world to extinguish the light of one small candle." What an encouragement to a war-torn country! What an encouragement to us! Have you not spent sleepless hours in the darkness of the night? Job said, "My bones are pierced in me in the night season; and my sinews take no rest." (Job 30:17) And the psalmist said in Psalm 30:5, "weeping may endure for a night." Things do seem to be worse in the night. But, we have more encouragement than just an inscription on a tombstone, as inspiring as that one is. John wrote it: "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:5) The psalmist reminds us, "the day is thine (God's) the NIGHT also is thine." (Ps. 74:16) and "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." (Ps. 139:12)



Kerr

The Bible gives us suggestions for the dark nights. Seek for God's appearing as he did to Solomon: "In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and saith unto him, Ask what I shall give thee." (2 Chr. 1:7)

Follow Jesus' example: "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." (Luke 6:12) Then we can say with the psalmist: "I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." (Ps. 63:6) and, "in the night HIS song shall be with me —" (Ps. 42:8).

We may take courage also in the description of our heavenly home given in Revelation 21:25, "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be NO NIGHT there."

Kerr lives in Jackson. Before retirement he was supervisor, senior adults/singles, Family Ministry Department, BSSB.

Troops can receive Christian literature

ATLANTA (BP) — Christian literature may now be sent to troops in Saudi Arabia, despite earlier restrictions on Christian material entering the Muslim-dominated country.

Low Burnett, director of military chaplaincy for the Home Mission Board, said the change is due to negotiations between Saudi Arabia officials and the U.S. Postal Service. Burnett said one Bible and small amounts of Christian literature may be mailed directly to specific individuals in Saudi Arabia.

Packages weighing up to 70 pounds may be sent through first class mail. Burnett suggested groups wanting to send large quantities of Christian literature contact the HMB chaplaincy division for shipping instructions.

Army, Air Force, and Marine personnel on ground units may be addressed at Operation Desert Shield, APO New York 09848-0006. Navy and Marine personnel on ships can be addressed at Operation Desert Shield, FPO New York 09866-0006.

Addresses of specific units are: 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, APO New York 09656; 24th Mechanized Infantry Division, APO New York 09315; 197th Infantry Brigade, APO New York 09315; 82nd Airborne Division, APO New York 09656; Third Armored Cavalry Regiment, APO New York 09209; and 101st Airborne Division, APO New York 09309.

Rwanda missionaries return

Wife — "I'll be ready in just one more minute, honey."

Husband — "Oh, no need to hurry now, sweetheart. I've got to shave again."

KIGALI, Rwanda (BP) — Five Southern Baptist missionaries who left Rwanda in October because of a rebel invasion planned to return Nov. 12, despite new rebel attacks near the east African nation's border with Uganda.

The five decided to rejoin 10 other Southern Baptist missionaries in Rwanda after the government declared victory over the estimated 4,000 rebels Nov. 1. But new fighting broke out Nov. 3 in two districts 60 miles north of the Rwandan capital, Kigali, as more rebels crossed the border from Uganda.

The new invading force is smaller and most observers expect government troops to defeat them also, said missionary Vernon Sivage of Midland, Texas.

The returning missionaries are David and Janet Hooten of Tifton, Ga.; John and Sharon Pond of Chesapeake, Va.; and Katrina Knox of Columbia, Tenn. They have been living in Kenya since mid-October. They hope to resume their work in different areas in northern Rwanda, Sivage said.

Ruschlikon trustees grapple with belief statement, financial needs

By Art Toalston

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP) — A first-ever statement of beliefs shared by European Baptists has been drafted by trustees of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Trustees of the 50-student international seminary also are studying the immediate and long-range finances of the institution, as well as the possibility of selling the Ruschlikon property and moving the school. The seminary is facing a possible budget shortfall of \$250,000 during its current fiscal year.

The proposed statement of European Baptist beliefs, which has not been released yet, is a response to one of 10 recommendations made by Foreign Mission Board trustees prior to their May 1989 transfer of ownership of the seminary to the European Baptist Federation.

Although the 10 points were phras-

ed as recommendations, some Foreign Mission Board trustees have voiced an expectation that European Baptists must fulfill each item — especially one "to consider the possibility for a written statement of European Baptist principles common to all European Baptists." It would "give expression to the seminary's biblical commitment," the FMB trustees outlined, and would be a statement "to which seminary teachers would subscribe."

John David Hopper, Ruschlikon seminary president and veteran Southern Baptist representative in Europe, declined to release the proposed statement of European Baptist beliefs, drafted by the seminary's 13 trustees during their Nov. 2-3 meeting.

The federation's executive committee may decide to forward the draft to

the organization's 85-member council, which includes representatives of 26 European Baptist bodies or "unions." The council's next meeting is in September 1991.

Regarding the seminary's financial troubles, most of the projected budget shortfall for the year stems from the declining value of the U.S. dollar in Europe, Hopper said. About 55 percent of the seminary's funds come in U.S. dollars. When the dollar drops, a part of the institution's anticipated budget "goes up in smoke," he explained.

The projected shortfall will deplete the seminary's reserve funds, which had accumulated in bonds over the years. Future deficits will require the institution to borrow against its property, Hopper said.

Toalston writes for FMB.

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